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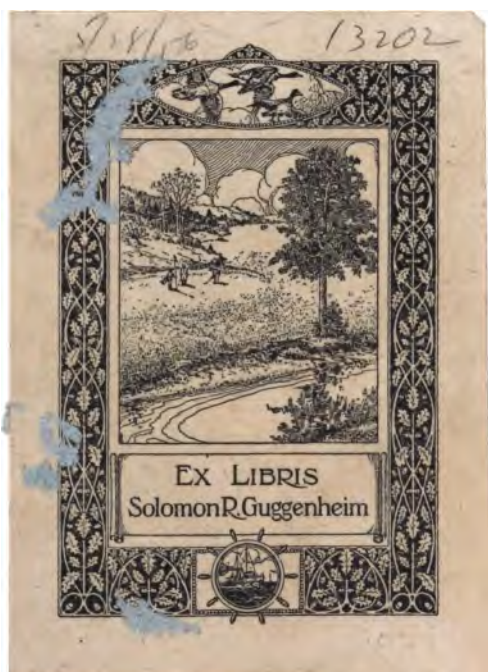
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DRAMAS,

By **SIR JAMES BLAND BURGESS, BART.**

13202
~~~~~  
IN TWO VOLUMES.  
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VOL. II.

CONTAINING

**CORTEZ,
THE STORM,
THE CRUSADERS,
RICHES.**

London:

Printed for EDWARD KERBY, Bookseller, &c.

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C O R T E Z.

A TRAGEDY.

Urbs antiqua ruit, multos dominata per annos

VIRGIL.

VOL. II.

B

1

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Spaniards.

CORTEZ,General of the Spaniards.

GONSALVO,

ALVARADO,

VELASQUEZ,

SALCEDA,

} Spanish Officers.

Soldiers.

Indians.

MONTEZUMA,Emperor of Mexico.

GUATIMOZIN,His Nephew.

TELASCO,Cacique of Tlascala.

OROZIMBO,A Mexican Captain.

CAPANA,A Tlascalan Officer.

TEUTILE,An old Mexican Peasant.

TACUBA,

OTUMBA,

} Young Mexicans.

ZELAMA,Montezuma's Sister.

Priests, Soldiers, &c.

Scene.—Mexico and the adjoining Country.

C O R T E Z.

A C T I.

SCENE I.

A sheltered Valley in Mexico. On one Side a Cottage.

Enter Teutile.

TEUTILE.

W E L C O M E once again, ye blest paternal bow'rs !
How gladly do I greet ye, when at eve,
My simple labours ended, I return
To share that bounty which benignant heav'n
Pours down on virtuous toil.—(*Shouts are heard.*)

What sounds are those ?

Again they rise—and now they seem approaching.

Enter Tacuba and Otumba.

TACUBA.

This way their course they bent. Methought I saw them
Ent'ring the grove which skirts this narrow vale.

OTUMBA.

But there we lost them.—Father, hast thou seen
Two fugitives? Their mien and garb are strange,
Their heads adorn'd with shining casques, surmounted
With shaggy trophies, and their bodies arm'd
With strange metallic coats—

TEUTILE.

I saw them not ;
Yet heard I shouts of war, that seem'd to shake
The neighb'ring hills and woods. What stirs ye thus?

TACUBA.

Hast thou not heard, how lately on our coasts,
Convey'd in huge machines with wings, to which
The mighty condor's shew but as a speck,
Arriv'd a pow'rful host of warlike strangers?
Who they may be, or whence they come, we know not,
But dreadful seem their faculties : some bear
The forms of men, yet not of men like us ;
While others, monsters of an unknown kind,
With hoofs far-sounding scour across the plain,
And bear destruction whereso'er they turn.

TEUTILE.

Of fearful prodigies ye tell, and strange.

OTUMBA.

More fearful yet have they approv'd themselves.
For arms they bear long spears, whose ends surcharg'd
With some hard substance strike with fatal aim ;
And tubes they have of yet more dire effect,
Whence issue flames and death.

TEUTILE.

And are their natures
As dreadful as their aspect ?

TACUBA.

Sternier yet.
Ferocious are they as the forest tiger ;
They seek for gold as if it were their food,
And quench their thirst with blood.

TEUTILE.

If such they be,
And so superior are their means of mischief,
How is't that thus, instead of flying from them,
So eagerly you follow up their course ?

TACUBA.

As in array they march'd across our hills,
Some ten or twelve, attracted by our dwellings,
Remain'd behind their host. With fell intent
They rush'd upon us ; to our straw-clad roofs

Their flaming torches they applied : nor sex,
Nor age—not infancy itself they spar'd.

OTUMBA.

But on their heads their crimes we well aveng'd.
Awhile their mailed coats withstood our weapons ;
But soon of those who had oppos'd our vengeance
All fell, save two, whom now we hope to find.
They cannot far be distant.—Fare thee well,
And pray for our success.—Now to o'ertake them !

[*Exeunt Tacuba and Otumba.*]

TEUTILE.

Hide, hide thyself, oh sun ! Let not thy beams
Witness such dread enormities.—Alas !
Too true an emblem art thou of our state :
Like thee, forth bursting from thine eastern bed,
We wake to life, and all surrounding nature
Seems deck'd with loveliness and coming joy ;
Like thee ambitiously we make our progress,
Now splendid, now by passing clouds obscur'd,
Now our beams shorn by overwhelming tempests ;
Like thee at length, our toilsome journey past,
We sink in darkness, and are seen no more.—
Defend me, gracious pow'rs ! What forms are those
Hither advancing ? Are they men or spirits ?
Alas ! too sure they are of human sort,
And mortal as myself. One of them's wounded—

Are these the strangers whom our youth pursue ?—
Hither they come—I will retire and watch them.

[*He goes aside.*]

Enter Gonsalvo and Alvarado.

GONSALVO.

So—gently—lean on me, my Alvarado.

ALVARADO.

Alas, Gonsalvo ! from this gaping wound
Ebbs the last remnant of departing life.
I can no more—Is there no friendly turf,
On which I may repose my stiff'ning limbs ?

GONSALVO.

Here—rest beneath this shade—I will watch o'er thee.
Where in this desert can I look for succour,
For some kind hand to mitigate thy sufferings ?

ALVARADO.

Give me some water to assuage my thirst.

GONSALVO.

No stream flows here. Perhaps within yon grove,
Where fresher seems the herbage, I may find—
Hark ! heard'st thou not a sound ?—Some one
approaches—

Is it some new assailant hot for vengeance ?
Some Indian yet unsated with our blood ?

TEUTILE (*advancing*).

Stranger, whoe'er thou art—But wherefore thus

Draw forth thy weapon? Why dost start to view me?
Can danger daunt thee, wretched as thou art?

GONSALVO.

Thou chid'st me fairly. For a wretch like me,
'Twere better to forego at once a life,
Which holds out nought but perspectives of woe.
I fear not for myself: the stroke which ends me
Cuts off at most some years of want and pain,
And should be welcom'd. But I have a friend,
Compar'd with whose distresses mine are small.
Good Indian! If thou'st ever felt compassion—

TEUTILE.

Art thou not one of those of whom I heard,
Who, unprovok'd, have landed on our coast,
And spread destruction 'mid our peaceful tribes?

GONSALVO.

I dare not palliate our offence: 'tis rank—
But let not now thy vengeance be extreme,
For mis'ry presses on us. When thou see'st
A poor defenceless fellow creature, cast
A suppliant on thy mercy, think oh! think
Of his distressful state, and pity him.

TEUTILE.

He listen'd not to pity.

GONSALVO.

Did high heav'n

From ev'ry sinful man withhold it's mercy,
Who should find favour?—As thou art a man,
As thou hast eyes to see, and heart to feel,
Aid me to bear him to some safe retreat.

TEUTILE.

Thou mov'st me strangely—But it may not be.
Thou hast confess'd thyself my country's foe:
He too, who justly suffers for his crimes—

GONSALVO.

We cannot harm thee now; and, if we could,
Thy kindness would disarm us.—Look on him—
He's no one's enemy now—The hand of death
Presses hard on him. I will kneel to thee—

TEUTILE.

Arise, poor youth! Thy pleading half unmans me.
I have a cot, where I could shelter thee—

GONSALVO.

Oh let it shield us from impending danger!
The works of charity are ne'er forgotten,
But, when thou most may want them, will avail thee.

TEUTILE.

My judgment checks me, but my heart prevails.
Thou shalt not perish. I will succour thee.
Assist to bear thy comrade to my cot.
How wan and pale he looks! He gazes on us,
And tries to speak, but cannot.

C O R T E Z.

G O N S A L V O.

Gently move him.

T E U T I L E.

Now on—This way, my son—So—bear him in.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

*A wild mountainous Country.**Enter Cortez, Velasquez and Soldiers.*

C O R T E Z.

Thus far, in spite of all surrounding perils,
 Our daring enterprize hath well advanc'd.
 To-morrow's sun shall lead us on to conquest:
 Proud Mexico, which o'er her subject lake
 In tow'ring majesty exalts her head,
 Shall vail her glories and confess our sway.
 What say'st thou now, Velasquez? Dost thou now
 Regret the navy, which on yonder shore
 With minds determin'd we consign'd to flames?

V E L A S Q U E Z.

Cortez! when first thou spok'st of thy resolve
 To bar all transit from this western world,
 I scann'd alone the risk which might attend
 A plan so bold and daring; now I feel
 Thy better wisdom, and pursue thy fortunes.

CORTEZ.

Doubt not their issue. Hath not Zempoalla,
With all her tribes, our victor standards join'd?
Some fav'ring spirit seems to guide our march,
And point the way to empire, wealth and fame.

Enter Salceda.

Salceda! welcome. Say, from Tlascala
What tidings bear'st thou? Do her chiefs refuse
Our proffer'd friendship, or, impress'd with awe,
Submit they like the rest, and grace our triumph?

SALCEDA.

I know not which, but shortly thou wilt learn.
To meet thee here, Telasco, their cacique,
Advances with his host.

CORTEZ.

Soft ye awhile—

Was it not he, of whom in Zempoalla
Of late we heard?

SALCEDA.

The same.

CORTEZ.

Who sought the hand
Of Montezuma's sister, and who since,
His suit rejected by her haughty brother,
Th' imperial court had sullenly relinquish'd?

SALCEDA.

So said our new allies.

CORTEZ.

Comes he to meet us?

Let him—'tis well—if in his soul still lodge
The ranc'rous feelings which he lately nourish'd,
They haply may be turn'd to our advantage.
'Tis worth experiment.—Marches he quickly?

SALCEDA.

He bad me hasten hither, to announce
His speedy coming.

CORTEZ.

Here then we'll await him.

These civil broils promote our great design.
Is this Telasco like those other chieftains,
On whose unpractis'd minds we have prevail'd?

SALCEDA.

Expect not so to find him. He appears
Cast in a rougher mould. A bolder savage,
Or one on whom the hand of nature stamps
A character more firm, I have not seen.

CORTEZ.

'Tis well—but hark! O'er yonder rugged hills
Already bursts his uncouth minstrelsy—
And see, descending from their beetling summits,
In rude array his forces bend their march.

Throughout our host immediate orders issue
To hold themselves prepar'd.—That must be he—
He bears indeed a brave and gallant aspect—

Enter Telasco and Soldiers.

TELASCO.

Arrest your march !—Are these the wond'rous strangers,
Who, borne on flying castles o'er the main,
And arm'd with thunder, are arriv'd among us ?
Where is the daring leader of your host ?

CORTEZ.

Renown'd cacique ! I hail thy welcome presence.
Behold in me the messenger of good,
Who 'cross the foaming waves have held my course,
To plant amid your tribes our holy faith,
And spread among you Europe's arts and knowledge.

TELASCO.

Thy faith we heed not, and thy arts we scorn.
What can'st thou teach us ? — Can'st thou make us
stronger ?
Can'st thou instruct us how to face the tiger,
To twang the bow—to hurl the spear—to dare
Our foes, or bravely vindicate our rights ?
These are our arts, and these we know already.

CORTEZ.

As yet we're strangers to thee. More acquaintance

Will prove what are our faculties. I'll shew thee,
Ere thou depart'st, the wonders of our pow'r,
How at our will around us light'nings fly,
How we can rouse the thunder's pealing voice,
And with death-dealing energy o'erthrow
Whole legions of our foes array'd in arms.

TELASCO.

Art thou a god, and these thy ministers ?
Lo ! if thou art, and if propitious be
Thy purposes, I'll bring thee store of gold,
Perfumes and gems. If thou be mortal man,
I'll lay before thee fruits to nourish thee,
Garments to screen thee from the sun's fierce ray,
And plumage to adorn thee.

CORTEZ.

No, cacique !

We boast not godlike pow'r, but by heav'n's favour
We have those rights, and that pre-eminence,
Which thou wilt shortly learn to recognize.
We have no hostile purposes ; our wish
Is to establish lasting friendship with you.

TELASCO.

If then ye're men, and mercy be your nature,
What leads you thus 'gainst Mexico to march ?

CORTEZ.

We come, by Europe's pow'rful monarch charg'd,

To seek th' alliance of your Indian prince.
Should he receive us courteously, we mean
As friends with equal courtesy to greet him :
Should he oppose us, then our king's command
With our good arms we doubt not to enforce.

TELASCO.

What—with a force like thine, a handful merely,
T'encounter with his myriads?—Look to it well—
Think'st thou that he, before whose rule e'en I,
Aye I, Telasco, bend, will crouch to thee?
Away, away!—Like the thin rack that flits
O'er heav'n's expanse, and vanishes to nothing,
When from his chamber in the glowing east
The sun in radiant majesty bursts forth,
Thy puny armament will melt before him—

CORTEZ.

I value not his myriads. Let him draw them
From ev'ry quarter of his wide domain,
Unaw'd would I encounter him. I've pow'rs,
Which yet he knows not of, but soon will learn,
That render me invincible. Yet wish I
In milder guise my mission to perform,
'Bove all with thee. I ask thy friendship, chief.
I am no common man, nor is my proffer
Of slight avail. I can redress the wrongs
Which thou from Montezuma hast sustain'd—

TELASCO.

Where heard'st thou of my wrongs ?

CORTEZ.

Thou'rt yet to learn

Our wond'rous faculties. Let those, who dar'd
Provoke our vengeance, tell thee of our prowess.
They witness'd and have felt it. Yet 'tis nothing
To the surpassing energies wherewith
We are by nature blest. The past, the future,
Alike are present to us ; earth and sea
Confess our lordly sway ; the elements
Of air and fire are to our voice obedient.
Far as the region, where with vivid ray
From the vast deep the sun his orb displays,
Our dwelling lies ; yet not from us conceal'd
Thy wrongs remain'd.

TELASCO.

Such pow'r is more than human !—

And wilt thou then employ such gifts for me ?

CORTEZ.

I will, and shortly too. Let the proud tyrant,
Who scorn'd thy claims, exultingly display
His boasted forces, let him circle round
His splendid throne with millions of his vassals,
I'll lead thee, gallant friend, to fame and vengeance.

TELASCO.

Vengeance ! The very sound of it transports me.
 Let me but fairly meet him face to face,
 And fate may do its worst.—But tell me truly—
 I would be sure—for deeply rankles here
 Remembrance of the wrongs which I sustain'd
 From that injurious despot—My Zelama,
 Array'd in all her native loveliness,
 By day, by night, still haunts my lab'ring fancy—
 I see her as she was, when first her heart
 Own'd me its lord—I hear her breathe fond vows
 Of everlasting tenderness and love—
 I see the pangs which rack'd her feeling bosom
 When her proud brother tore her from my arms—
 There's madness in the thought !—Canst thou feel for me ?
 Wil'st aid my just revenge ?

CORTEZ.

Thou need'st not doubt me.
 I am a Spaniard. 'Tis my nation's boast,
 Honour and plighted faith to keep unstain'd.

TELASCO.

I would confide in thee.—There's that about thee
 Which bears a shew of honesty—I know not—

CORTEZ.

Dost doubt me then ? 'Tis sign thou know'st me not.
 He, who suspects my honour, is unworthy

Of sharing in my friendship.—Fare thee well—
I thought more nobly of thee.

TELASCO.

Nay, thou wrong'st me.

CORTEZ.

'Tis thou wrong'st me. I doubted not thy faith,
But with a soldier's frankness proffer'd thee
My pow'rful aid to vindicate thy cause—

TELASCO.

No more, no more! I will no longer doubt thee.
Swear that thou wilt maintain my injur'd rights,
That thou wilt never meet on peaceful terms
Our common foe, 'till all Telasco's wrongs
Shall be redress'd—swear this, and with my hand
Accept my friendship and the aid I bring thee.

CORTEZ.

Hear, oh ye heav'nly pow'rs! Record my vow,
While thus to Tlascala's brave prince I swear
Eternal friendship; hear, while I proclaim
Myself th' assertor of his love and glory!

TELASCO.

Now, Montezuma! shalt thou own thy wrongs,
Now shall Telasco, like an angry spirit,
Appal thy soul, and force thee to be just!
Let us not lose a moment—Vengeance, love,
Call for immediate action. Lead thine host

To join my hardy Tlascalans. See, where
On yonder spreading heights they stand. Our clime
Boasts not of hearts more valiant or resolv'd.
Come—to our guardian gods we'll altars raise,
And in their presence ratify our vows.

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Front of Teutile's Cottage.

Enter Teutile and Gonsalvo.

TEUTILE.

CHEER up, young stranger—Nourish not a grief
So unavailing. Fate may yet relent—

GONSALVO.

Alas! good father, what hath fate in store
For such a wretch as I am? Flown for ever
Are the gay prospects of my op'ning youth;
Friends, country, all that give a zest to life
For ever lost!—In the cold earth is laid
My brave, my luckless friend. His cares are over—
When mine will end—

TEUTILE.

Take courage. Thou may'st yet
See thy lov'd country, once again embrace
Those whom thy sick'ning heart now yearns to meet.

GONSALVO.

Could I indeed review them! That were bliss
I scarcely dare to hope for. Yet I know not—
There may be means—

TEUTILE.

Would'st thou rejoin thy comrades?

GONSALVO.

Could'st thou object t' it?

TEUTILE.

'Tis an honest wish,
Which nature prompts, and man should not oppose.
But mark me, youth—Should'st thou with them combine
To spread destruction 'mid our peaceful tribes,
Oh! think what double guilt would load thy soul.
Thou had'st no claim on me; the innocent blood
Wherewith thy hands were stain'd bore witness 'gainst thee,
And cried aloud for vengeance; yet I sav'd thee—

GONSALVO.

May heav'n's dread bolt light on me, if I harm
One of thy gen'rous people! While my soul
Preserves the mem'ry of thy recent kindness,
My voice shall plead for them, my arm shall guard them.

TEUTILE.

Go, good young man, I will not, cannot doubt thee.
Thou hast a feeling heart; follow it's guidance
When suff'ring fellow creatures claim thy pity,

And heav'n will pay thee tenfold.—Come—prepare—
 Take some provision for thy vent'rous course,
 And then may Providence direct thy way !

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

A wild mountainous Country.

Enter Cortez and Velasquez.

CORTEZ.

This savage is a brave ally ; he brings
 A force with him which we may well employ.
 I look'd not for such succour.

VELASQUEZ.

Never yet
 Saw I his equal. Bold he is and ardent,
 Untameable his passions, proud, resentful,
 But then withal so cred'lous—Had'st thou seen him
 E'en now, when through our armament I led him,
 How dumb with wonder he survey'd our weapons,
 Admir'd our armour, touch'd, examin'd all—

CORTEZ.

No marvel things so new should thus amaze him.

VELASQUEZ.

But what most mov'd and pleas'd him were our horses.
 'Twas mine own steed he saw, caparison'd,

Champing his bit, and ready for my mounting.
 "What's this?" exclaim'd he—"is't a man?—a god?"
 "'Tis," I replied, "the partner of my toils;
 "Borne on his back, no obstacles can check
 "My rapid course; swift as the wind we fly,
 "Surmount the cliff, plunge through the raging flood"—
 No more he heard me—with a vault he bounded
 Into the seat—

CORTEZ.

'Tis a courageous savage.
 Thy courser's mettled, over-match'd I fear
 For such unpractis'd guider.

VELASQUEZ.

Not a whit.
 With a loud shout he shot across the plain,
 Urging the vigour of th' affrighted steed—

Enter Telasco.

TELASCO.

Such wonders have I seen!—I've held a race
 With the fleet winds and beat them. Oft I've chas'd
 The nimble antelope and have outstript him,
 But ne'er 'till now saw I so brave a creature
 As that which bore me. He was all fire, all life,
 All energy! Methought one soul inspir'd us.
 Then such docility—What country's thine
 Which boasts such prodigies?

CORTEZ.

I'll shew thee greater.

TELASCO.

Thou deal'st in miracles. Turn where I will,
Some new enchantment meets my dazzled sight.
Why ev'ry element is subject to thee ;
Thou dost command them all. Thy coats are proof
'Gainst our keen arrows—Say—Where grows the metal,
Which thy superior pow'rs have master'd thus ?

CORTEZ.

In Europe, whence we come. Thou shalt have store on't.

TELASCO.

Wilt give me store on't ? Thou'rt a friend indeed !

CORTEZ.

Take from my hand this bright and trusty faulchion—

TELASCO.

To me ! In very truth dost give it me ?
Now, now indeed am I invincible.
Methinks some spirit doth reside in it,
That through my ev'ry nerve and vein diffuses
New life and energy. My blood runs quicker,
My heart more strongly beats, each faculty
Seems as 'twere doubly brac'd for instant action.
Now, now let Montezuma summon forth
His countless thousands—Let him dare me now !
Thus arm'd, I'll meet him—meet the proud oppressor,

Shake his high throne, and from his vanquish'd hand
Snatch my Zelama!—And thou giv'st it me?
What would'st thou have? Can gold, can gems requite thee?
Speak, gen'rous Spaniard, tell me what return—

CORTEZ.

If thou art gratified, return is made.
My friendship is not bounded by such trifles.
Thou shalt have more. I'll teach thee how to use
Those wonder-working tubes, which vomit flames,
And like the angry bolt of heav'n deal forth
Assur'd destruction on the distant foe.

TELASCO.

Would'st make me equal to thyself?

CORTEZ.

In all,
In all will we be brothers. Prove thyself
True to our friendship, and partake with me
In full community the pow'rs I hold.

TELASCO.

Give me thy hand—

CORTEZ.

'Tis thine—Now on to Mexico!
Soon shalt thou learn how far my pow'rs extend.
Her prince shall bow to our confed'rate force;
Glory shall wait on thee; Zelama's charms

Shall be the noble guerdon of thy toils.

TELASCO.

'Tis transport—ecstasy ! Let us set forth—
I'll follow thee, thou harbinger of good !
Let thy loud trumps proclaim our instant march ;
Then on—to love, to glory, and Zelama !

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Montezuma's Palace.

Enter Montezuma, Guatimozin, and Caciques.

MONTEZUMA.

At this eventful moment, which seems pregnant
With Mexico's and Montezuma's fate,
I have assembled you, caciques ! to scan,
If yet we may, the means of present safety.
Perils as yet unheard of menace us.
Were our foes ordinary men, we need not
Fear their attack ; sufficient is our force
To meet their utmost efforts. But with such
We cope not now.

GUATIMOZIN.

If signal be our peril,
Let our defence be correspondent to it.

When common dangers threaten, common courage
 May arm us 'gainst them : ordinary men
 Grow heroes when their risk is ascertain'd :
 New perils are the touchstone of our virtue,
 And prove the sterling value of our spirits.
 I speak the thought of all your brave caciques.
 True to their king, their country, and themselves,
 To guard thy throne, to face these pow'rful strangers,
 Behold them ready to devote themselves,
 And rush to action when their monarch bids them.

MONTEZUMA.

Such sentiments become you. Take my thanks.
 Could princely valour save our menac'd state,
 Well might I trust your patriotic zeal ;
 But dreadful are the times in which we live,
 And destiny itself seems arm'd against us.
 (*To Guatimozin*) Give me thine ear—Thou canst not
 have forgotten
 The prophecy recorded in our archives—

GUATIMOZIN.

Some legend, bred by ignorance, and foster'd
 By superstitious fear—

MONTEZUMA.

Term it not so.
 'Tis most authentic, and receiv'd for ages
 As a mysterious warning of the fate

Which would befall our empire.

GUATIMOZIN.

I'm no friend

To oracles and mystic revelations,
Couch'd under doubtful words to raise alarm,
And dupe the cred'lous.—But, I pray, proceed.

MONTEZUMA.

Thus runs the mystic warning of our fate—
That at th' appointed period—and what time
More likely than the present?—should arrive,
From regions far beyond the eastern main,
A hardy band, the sons of those who erst
The proud foundations of our empire laid,
From us to claim their rightful heritage.

GUATIMOZIN.

And these are they?

MONTEZUMA.

Too surely such they seem.

GUATIMOZIN.

If such be fate's decree, our duty is
To meet it as we ought. If we must fall,
Oh! let us fall like men; let us dispute
Our territory inch by inch. By heav'n!
When in his country's cause a soldier falls,
The little spot which his cold body covers
Is richer than an empire!

MONTEZUMA.

There are times
When cooler councils should predominate ;
And such is this.—Nay, be not thus incred'lous—
There are alarming portents, prodigies,
Strange voices, hosts embattled in the sky—

Enter Orozimbo.

OROZIMBO.

Commission'd by our holy priests I come,
To give thee notice that the sacrifice
In honour of our gods hath been fulfill'd.
Thy presence is requir'd.

MONTEZUMA.

Prov'd all propitious ?

OROZIMBO.

I dar'd not glance within the sacred veil
Which shrouds from eyes impure their solemn rite,
But a low murmur ran of angry gods,
And pale and ghastly were the looks of those
Who slowly issuing forth gave me their orders.

MONTEZUMA.

I told thee so—I knew our gods were adverse.
Go not away—remain—I fly to learn
What hath betided, what may next ensue.

[Exit with Caciques.]

Manent Guatimozin and Orozimbo.

GUATIMOZIN.

Alas ! that superstition thus should quench
 Those energies, which can alone redeem 'us !
 Is he a man ? Hath he a soul or sense ?
 Is this a time to deal with oracles,
 To truckle to his priests ?

OROZIMBO.

I greatly fear .
 He hath more solid grounds for apprehension.
 From the remoter border of the lake
 A messenger is come, who tells th' approach
 Of our redoubted foes.

GUATIMOZIN.

Why let them come !
 Why should we fear them ?

OROZIMBO.

Vict'ry mark'd their course,
 Successive provinces confess'd their sway ;
 Nay, what transcends belief, amid their ranks
 In proud defiance wave Telasco's banners.

GUATIMOZIN.

Telasco join with them ! He, he desert us !
 Then from the earth are faith and honour flown.
 Art certain he hath join'd them ?

OROZIMBO.

He who told it
Is most authentic. But behold the princess.
She looks alarm'd. Pray heav'n she heard it not.

Enter Zelama.

ZELAMA.

What new calamities hath fate in store ?
Whence all these horrors, which like black'ning clouds
Collect around us ? Tell me, Guatimozin,
Nor fear to speak—I am prepar'd for all.
As here I pass'd, I met my royal brother.
On his dark brow dread and suspicion sat :
When I address'd him, with an air disturb'd
He put me from him, and abruptly left me.

GUATIMOZIN.

I cannot tell thee. There are strange reports—
He hath enough to move him, real dangers
Enough to shake a stronger mind than his :
But superstition in his soul hath lodg'd
Her deadly poison ; deeply there it rankles,
Unmans him, and defeats our last sad hope.

ZELAMA.

Alas ! too well I know his mind is prone
To credit myst'ries, which his cooler judgment
Had taught him to despise. Have then the priests
Thus wrought upon him ?

GUATIMOZIN.

Yes—obscure traditions,
The frantic ravings of a zealot's brain,
Distort his sense, and magnify the perils
Which manly valour would disdain to fear.

Enter Montezuma, hastily.

MONTEZUMA.

Save me, protect me, heav'n! Where can I shroud
In tenfold shades the horrors which assail me?
Oh had some rock torn from its base o'erwhelm'd me,
Had the earth open'd and inclos'd me living,
It had been mercy!

ZELAMA.

What alarms thee thus?
Why tremble thus thy limbs?—Speak, I conjure thee.

MONTEZUMA.

Oh my Zelama! ruin stalks around us—
Our doom is spoken—I have heard such things—

ZELAMA.

In mercy speak—

MONTEZUMA.

Thou canst not bear to hear it.

ZELAMA.

Try me. My soul is firm.

MONTEZUMA.

Prepare thee then

To hear the tidings of our sure destruction.
 Scarce had I reach'd the sacred spot, where stood
 Our holy priests watching the altar's flame,
 Scarce had I glanc'd upon the bleeding victims
 Scatter'd around its base, when suddenly
 The temple shook, as if convulsing nature
 Rock'd the firm earth ; the torches ceas'd to blaze,
 Loud thunders burst, blue lightnings flash'd around,
 And streams of fire seem'd pouring from the roof.
 Sudden—it harrows up my heart to think on't—
 A voice was heard—It was no human sound—
 'Twas the great spirit's self—" Monarch," it cried,
 " Hear fate's decree. The vengeful hour approaches
 " From eastern climes arrives the destin'd race—
 " They come to claim their rightful heritage—
 " Thy Mexico must fall"—

GUATIMOZIN.

Be calm, my liege!
 Brave are your troops and loyal. Summon all
 To arm against these foes, whom thirst of gold—

MONTEZUMA.

Gold, say'st thou : Let them have their fill of it—
 What is our gold to us? Dross, baubles, nothing!
 Let them have more than e'er their av'rice dreamt of—

GUATIMOZIN.

Oh! stoop not thus to bribe them to forbearance.

We've strength, we've arms, and courage to employ them.
Let them be put to th' proof—

Enter MONTESUMA.

The stake's too high—
Here, Orozimbo—haste thee to their camp—
Take with thee gold—give it them on condition
That they retire—But hold—thou wilt be niggard;
When we require profusion—Follow me.

[Exit Montesuma and Orozimbo.]

Enter Marant Zelama and Guatimozin.

Enter Zelama.

Ah! lost indeed is Mexico, when thus
Her pilot quits the helm, and leaves her driving
At mercy of the waves. Alas, my brethren
Not thus our ancestors achiev'd their glory—

Enter GUATIMOZIN.

They listen'd not like him to such reports,
They bow'd not to the superstitious sway
Of their designing priests—What should appal us?

Enter ZELAMA.

True—all we want is constancy to face
A danger, which our constancy may vanquish;
Methinks, their numbers ought not thus to daunt us.
For ev'ry man they have, we have a thousand.

Enter GUATIMOZIN.

We lack not men; Had we but one to guide them,

Glorious success might wait on our exertions.

ZELAMA.

But one to guide them?—Have you not Telasco?
Have you not him; and talk of wanting leaders!
His spirit would suffice to stem the march
Of our invaders, were their numbers doubled,
And, doubled, ten times told.—Oh brave Telasco!
If Mexico's tame sons should hide their heads,
And shrink from peril when he call'd them on,
Her daughters would forsake their looms, would snatch
From their base hands their unavailing weapons,
And rush with him to share the splendid danger!

GUATIMOZIN.

Would he were here!

ZELAMA.

Is now that wish but form'd?
Knows not the brave Telasco of the perils
Which threaten us so nearly?

GUATIMOZIN.

Aye—he knows them.

ZELAMA.

Then Mexico may yet be safe.—When comes he?

GUATIMOZIN.

Rumour, which still delights in new alarms,
Which, though it sometimes may exceed the truth,
Doth sometimes tell it, hath brought heavy tidings—

ZELAMA.

Of what?

GUATIMOZIN,

That many vassals and allies
Have leagued against us.

ZELAMA.

What's that to Telasco?

GUATIMOZIN.

Nay worse—the Tlascalans—

ZELAMA.

They turn against us?
Could not Telasco keep them to their duty?

GUATIMOZIN.

What if he would not?

ZELAMA.

Ha! what is't thou say'st?

Why look'st thou thus?

GUATIMOZIN.

How can I speak it to thee?

Telasco—must I tell it thee?—is false—

ZELAMA.

False is the tongue which slanders thus his fame!

He false! He rebel! He support our foes!

Oh wrong'd Telasco!—What! The patriot hero,

Who with his blood his loyalty has seal'd!

'Tis false! He lives to succour and protect us.

GUATIMOZIN.

In yonder hostile camp his banners wave.
I would have spar'd you this. You wrung it from me—
Now can I but confirm it. Heav'n support thee!

[*Exit Guatimozin.*]

ZELAMA.

True, said he?—What! confirm it?—Gracious heav'n!
If he be false, o'ertake him in his course,
And pour upon his guilty head your vengeance!
It cannot be—some ven'mous tongue hath wrong'd him—
Or if, by momentary passion warp'd,
He may have err'd, my warning voice may save him.
I'll seek him even in the Spanish camp—
Yet hold—Alone, defenceless and a woman,
Dare I encounter perils, which to think on
Curdles my blood? But have I not a cause,
To arm my soul with more than manly spirit?
Hence then, vain terrors! Coward caution hence!
Love, honour, Mexico, shall drown your voice.
I come, Telasco! To thy soul I'll speak.
My bosom glows; inspiring hope impels me
To save my country and my hero's fame! [Exit.

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A Hall in Montezuma's Palace.

Enter Guatimozin and Orozimbo.

GUATIMOZIN.

G O N E forth to meet the foe? Hath Montezuma
Submitted to become a suppliant?
I thought thou had'st commission to repair
With splendid presents to the Spanish camp.

OROZIMBO.

I was prepar'd to go, when to his presence
I suddenly was call'd. I found the king
Surrounded by his priests. He listen'd eagerly
To their discourse of dreams and revelations,
Which seem'd to move him strangely.

GUATIMOZIN.

Yes—to them

He listens readily, when they rehearse
Their visionary fables—But proceed.

OROZIMBO.

I told him that the treasures were prepar'd

With that, attended by his priestly train
Who bore his off'rings, from the gate he issued—

GUATIMOZIN.

Hear'st thou? What means that clamour?

ORQZIMBO.

'Tis the king.

GUATIMOZIN.

Comes he as king, or as a captive led
By his insulting foes?

ORQZIMBO.

As forth he went
In regal dignity, so comes he back.

Enter Montezuma, Priests and Attendants.

MONTEZUMA.

Prepare for the reception of this envoy
From Europe's prince! Ye sacred ministers,
Hence to the temple; pay to the ruling spirit
Your tributary sacrifice of thanks.
I will forthwith attend you.—Guatimozin!
Rejoice with me: our cause of dread is past.

GUATIMOZIN.

I would indeed rejoice if it were past.

MONTEZUMA.

Trust me we did injustice to these strangers:
They are not foes; from Europe's prince they come,
With us to form alliance.

GUATIMOZIN.

Come allies

As these invaders come!

MONTEZUMA.

Thou dost mistake them.

Had'st heard their leader state the friendly views

And peaceable intentions of his king,

Thou had'st believ'd him.

GUATIMOZIN.

I'd believe as soon

The hooded serpent would not wound my hand,

Were I to stretch it tow'rds him! that the tiger,

When crouching for his prey and hot for blood,

Would spare his trembling victim!

MONTEZUMA.

Thou shalt see,

And shortly too, how futile are thy doubts.

The noble Cortez will ere long arrive,

Confiding in our honour and good faith,

Within these walls to ratify our treaty.

GUATIMOZIN.

Within these walls? Shall we thus court destruction?

Think on't again—Bare if thou will'st thy breast

To the tornado—seek pale pestilence

When in the air she hovers—but beware

How thou trust'st him!

MONTEZUMA.

Why not? There are occasions,
 When manly confidence is our best wisdom;
 And such I deem the present: Come with me—
 Join in our sacrifice; then talk with Cortez,
 Hear him detail his friendly purposes,
 And thou'lt confess that Mexico is safe. *[Exit,*

SCENE II.

Outskirt of Cortez's Camp.

Enter Gonsalvo.

GONSALVO.

Yonder's our camp—now am I safe again:
 Propitious heav'n, which through surrounding perils
 Hast guarded and supported me, receive
 The tribute of my thanks!—But soft—who comes?—
 A woman? And alone?—Her garb bespeaks her
 Of no mean quality—she seems disturb'd.

[He stands aside.]

Enter Zelama, veiled.

ZELAMA.

Oh why, when urg'd by duty and by love
 Thus far have I advanc'd, does my heart shrink,
 And all my boasted resolution vanish?
 I deem'd myself more able to support

The hazards of my enterprize—Defend me,
Ye heav'nly pow'rs! Who thus approaches me?

GONSALVO.

Maiden, why thus alone so near our camp
Hast thou adventur'd? Be not thus alarm'd.
Thou may'st confide in me. I will not harm thee.

ZELAMA.

Thou look'st as if—and yet thy words are friendly—
Art thou not one of those, who arm'd with terrors
Have landed 'mong us—

GONSALVO.

Lady, I am one,

Who, though to arms inur'd, have learn'd to reverence
Thy sex's claim; whose heart can feel it's power,
And whose best zeal will guard it.

ZELAMA.

Courteous stranger,

I am not prone to doubt, and thy fair words
Might well disarm suspicion; yet report
Hath told such things—Thou surely art of those,
Whose bold aggression hath provok'd our fears.

GONSALVO.

Though here with those invaders I arriv'd,
My nature is not savage. Had it been so,
I had not merited the name of man,
If to the kindness of thy countrymen

I prov'd insensible: I was at his mercy,
And must have perish'd, had not the kind hand
Of a good Indian sav'd me from destruction.
Can I reflect on that, and injure thee?

ZELAMA.

I will confide in thee. I need protection,
And claim it from thee.

GONSALVO.

Freely speak thy pleasure,
And tax my utmost service. Let us hence,
Nor linger here. This precinct of a camp
Is not a place where thou may'st fitly stay.

ZEDAMA.

I thank thee. Know'st thou where in yonder lines
Telasco's banners wave?—Conduct me to him.
Ask in return what recompense thou wil'st.

GONSALVO.

Far from my soul be such ignoble thought!
No, lady, no—the Indian who reliev'd me
Ask'd no return; his bounty, like the dew
Of gracious heav'n, spontaneously descended,
And rous'd my dormant virtue into action.
There lies our way. Be of good courage, lady;
Whate'er betide, I'll guard thee with my life.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

*Cortez's Camp.**Enter Cortez and Velasquez, with Soldiers.*

CORTEZ.

Is all prepar'd? Have you throughout our line
Issued mine orders?

VELASQUEZ.

Ev'ry thing is ready.

CORTEZ.

Let us 'bove all maintain strict discipline,
And gain firm footing in yon Mexico.
We shall have time enough to drop the mask,
When we're once 'stablish'd in their confidence.
Be this attended to. *(He stands musing.)*

VELASQUEZ.

'Tis well advis'd.

When once we're safely lodg'd, let 'em look to it.
The courtly train that waited on their king
Gave us a tempting sample of the wealth
We may expect to find within the town.
'Twill be a booty to enrich us all.

CORTEZ.

And hark, Velasquez! Search Telasco out.
That hair-brain'd savage may defeat our plans
Should we neglect to watch him. Had the king

Met us in arms, he might have serv'd us well :
 As 'tis, observe him closely ; take good heed
 He go not with us to the town.—How now !
 What brings him here o' th' sudden ?

Enter Telasco.

TELASCO.

(To the soldiers)—Stand aside—

(To Cortez)—'Tis well I've found thee—Tell me, thou
 deceiver,

Hath Montezuma visited the camp,
 While I was unappriz'd, as if I were
 An abject thing, unworthy of regard ?
 Thou knew'st I would have met him face to face—

CORTEZ.

Be patient, valiant prince ! The time will come—

TELASCO.

I tell thee that the time is come—is past—
 Shame on thy promises ! Is this thy faith ?
 Did'st thou not swear thou would'st espouse my cause,
 That thou would'st ne'er with Montezuma treat,
 'Till all my wrongs should be redress'd ?

CORTEZ.

I did.—

Charge me with perfidy and breach of faith !
 But I forgive thee. I was not inform'd
 Of his intended visit, and so brief

Our conf'rence prov'd, had I implor'd thy presence,
 His quick return had frustrated thy meeting.
 But shortly shalt thou fit occasion find
 Effectually to urge thy rightful claims.

TELASCO.

When wil't arrive?

CORTEZ.

This day.

TELASCO.

Comes he so shortly?

CORTEZ.

He comes not hither—we repair to him.

He hath with lib'ral confidences invited

Me and my friends to visit Mexico.

TELASCO.

That's well—exceeding well—In Mexico?

Within his walls?—I thank thee for the tidings.

How could I doubt thee, how suspect thy faith?

I do repent me.—If my hasty nature

Hath wrought perversely in me, pass it over.—

In Mexico!—Then shall I view Zelama,

Bask in her heav'nly smiles—Oh gen'rous Spaniard!

If in thy native clime thou'st own'd the pow'r

Of all-subduing love—

CORTEZ.

I have not been

A TRAGEDY.

47

Insensible to beauty—I have lov'd—

TELASCO.

I knew it—thou'rt too noble and too brave
Not to have bow'd to his resistless sway.
But when thou seest the virgin whom I love,
When thou shalt hear her eloquently speak,
Shalt see her eyes beaming with tenderness—

CORTEZ.

I shall impatiently expect to meet her.
Announce me as thy friend; bid her receive me
As one who loves thee.

TELASCO.

She will love thee then—
But let's away—my soul is on the wing—
Each moment lost is treason to my love.

CORTEZ.

Forward then—on to Mexico, to glory,
To the completion of thy fondest hopes.
Array thy force—hold them prepar'd to march
When the loud clarion breathes its warning note.
'Till then in yonder vale let them remain.
Farewell—I hasten to draw forth my line,
And then—

TELASCO.

And then for vengeance and Zelama!
I pray thee haste—issue thine orders quickly—

Let but thy clarion give its welcome call,
And swifter than heav'n's bolt we follow thee !

[*Exit Telasco.*]

C O R T E Z.

So—we're well rid of him—let him but wait
Where I have plac'd him 'till my clarion sounds,
And he's secure enough—we need not watch him.
Ere this impetuous savage shall have rang'd
His rude battalions, on yon lofty walls
In proud defiance shall my banners wave.
Then let him dare me if he will !—Velasquez !
Give orders for our instant march—away ! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

Interior of Telasco's Tent.

Enter Telasco and Capana.

T E L A S C O.

How wears the time ?

C A P A N A.

Two hours are nearly pass'd,
Since the bright sun his high meridian left.

T E L A S C O.

The day grows old, and we are still inactive.
What can those Spaniards find to keep them thus ?
Would Cortez had the spur in him which I have !

He would not linger—Go—enquire the cause—
Bring me prompt answer. [*Exit Capana.*]

By my faith, this Spaniard
Is of a gallant nature, frank and noble.
I was to blame in doubting his good faith :
I do repent me of it. With what kindness
Did he pass over my impatient chidings,
And give me in return the blissful hope
Which now expands my heart.

Enter Capana.

CAPANA.

A Spanish warrior,
With a veil'd damsel, earnestly implores
Immediate audience.

TELASCO.

Think'st thou I can waste
My time on suitors now? Say I'm employ'd.

CAPANA.

I told them so. The warrior acquiesc'd,
But with augmented earnestness the damsel
Implor'd to see thee. Sighing she exclaim'd,
"He must receive me—urgent is my mission—"
"His fame, his hopes, his love depend on it!"

TELASCO.

Admit her straight— [*Exit Capana.*]

My fame, my hopes, my love!

What can this myst'ry mean ?

Enter Capana with Zelama veiled.

TELASCO.

Leave us alone—

[Exit Capana.]

Who art thou, damsel ? Wherefore seek'st thou thus
In phrase obscure and dark immediate audience ?
If of my love thou know'st, impart it quickly.

ZELAMA.

Of what, alas ! was once thy love—

TELASCO.

What was ?

ZELAMA.

What was—but which no longer now—

TELASCO.

What mean'st thou ?

Keep me not in suspense—speak—

ZELAMA.

Ask thine heart,

Consult that faithful monitor. 'Twill tell thee

If thou art constant to thy plighted faith,

If yet Zelama—

TELASCO.

If my heart yet love her !

There's not a drop, which from that fountain flows

Untinctur'd by my love ! There's not a pulse

Beats through my frame, which owes not strength to her!
Witness, ye heav'ns, and ye presiding spirits—

ZELAMA.

Invoke not heav'n to hear thy perjur'd vows—

TELASCO.

Forbear—provoke me not—my nature's hasty
When 'tis thus touch'd. I do respect thy sex—

ZELAMA.

I ask no shield to ward me from thy vengeance ;
Let it light on me, for my words shall wake it.
Know, faithless man ! it is Zelama speaks them.

(She unveils.)

TELASCO.

Zelama ! Gracious pow'rs !

ZELAMA.

Yes ! 'Tis Zelama,

Thy once believing, credulous Zelama !
She, at whose feet thou'st knelt, and pour'd forth vows
Of endless constancy ; she, who now finds thee
Bankrupt in faith, in honour and allegiance.

TELASCO.

What say'st thou ?—I forgetful of my faith !
Not purer is the flame, which from yon sun
Pervades this globe, than that which warms my heart.
Can'st thou accuse me thus ? There was a time—

ZELAMA.

There was a time—alas! can I recal it?—
 When I esteem'd thee Mexico's best hope,
 Our country's guardian, ornament and pride.
 I priz'd thee then, look'd up to thee for all
 Which love could promise, honour could fulfil.
 What art thou now?—Look from thy tent, and tell me!

TELASCO.

I have not merited this foul reproach.
 If ever I deserv'd my country's favour,
 If with thy love I e'er was bless'd, believe me,
 I'm still unchang'd, still true to thee as ever.
 What though I hither come array'd in arms;
 Though 'mid the ensigns of these warlike strangers
 My banners wave, still is my faith untainted;
 'Tis for thy sake I join'd them—

ZELAMA.

Mine!—Oh wretched,
 Oh lost Zelama!—Am I the pretext,
 The flimsy veil to screen a rebel's guilt?
 Where, where are flown those inborn sentiments
 Of gen'rous loyalty, that patriot zeal,
 Which grac'd thee once, for which alone I lov'd thee?
 Ah! where is now that hero, that Telasco,
 To whom our Mexico look'd up for safety?
 Behold him! See the rebel to his king

Crouch to th' invading Spaniard; mark his banners
Wave in derision o'er his bleeding country!

TELASCO.

Thy words are daggers to my heart. Thou wrong'st me.
Wast thou not torn from me? Did not thy brother
Spurn my alliance? Hope abandon'd me;
Despair and vengeance occupied my soul:
This Spaniard promis'd to assist my love,
And force reluctant justice from the tyrant
Who kept thee from me. If I gave him credence,
If I too rashly yielded to temptation—

ZELAMA.

Hath treason then assum'd a novel aspect,
Are honour, faith, allegiance, grown mere words,
Which thou may'st sport with as best suits thy purpose?
'Tis to thy heart I speak. I know thy nature;
'Tis noble, princely and ingenuous.
Thou should'st have known me too; known that my heart,
Which felt, which lov'd thy virtues, had the force
To east thee from me, should'st thou prove unworthy.

TELASCO.

Upbraid me still, but look not on me thus—
Weep'st thou?—I cannot bear thy tears—Oh turn!
Reject me not—Grant me a moment's thought—

ZELAMA.

Hear me, Telasco!—Thou hast known my heart,

How I esteem'd thee—lov'd thee—Nay, forbear—
That heart is yet unchang'd ; yet would I rather
Plant there my dagger, with my vital blood
Wash out thine image, than accept a hand
Arm'd 'gainst it's sov'reign and insulted country.

TELASCO.

I see, I see th' extent of my offence !
Conviction rushes on my soul—I stood
On the dread verge of a steep precipice,
And my next step had led me to destruction.
Thy hand arrested me. Forget my fault—
Cast me not from thee—I may yet redeem
My error, still prove worthy of thy favour.
Thus at thy feet I register my vows,
On this dear hand breathe forth my raptur'd soul,
And pledge myself to act as thou would'st have me !

ZELAMA.

There spoke Telasco ! Now again I know thee,
Now can I look on thee with pride, and hail thee
Our country's hero.—Come—the time demands
Immediate action ; dangers lour around ;
To Mexico already Cortez marches.
Know'st thou his plans ?

TELASCO.

I had no cause to doubt him.
His shew was honest. When he spoke with me,

He talk'd of peace and treating with the king.

ZELAMA.

I fear his purposes.

TELASCO.

He shall be watch'd,

And closely too.—But we too long delay :
My forces are array'd ; let me conduct thee
To where they stand expectant of my coming.
Thy presence will inspire them with fresh ardour,
And make them doubly brave. Then to thy brother !
Thou hast redeem'd me, and shalt plead my cause.

ZELAMA.

I'll do such justice to thy princely worth,
That he shall take thee to his inmost heart,
And with his sanction ratify thy hopes.

TELASCO.

Oh grant me but occasion to deserve it !
Place me 'mid perils great as my past errors,
Let death array'd in all his terrors face me,
I'll dare the glorious conflict, and, while arm'd
With thy approval, meet impending fate !

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

A public Place in Mexico.

Enter a number of Indians shouting—to them Orozimbo.

OROZIMBO.

AWAY! What mean ye thus to raise a clamour,
And rush together in tumultuous crowds?
Have ye not heard the proclamation,
That no one shall presume to bar the way,
But leave free passage for the princely train
Attendant on the emp'ror, when he marches
To meet the Spanish chief on his arrival?

*(Military music at a distance which gradually becomes
louder.)*

Hark!—they are at hand already—clear the way—

(Loud military music.)

*Enter Cortez, Velasquez, and Salceda, with the Spanish
army, cannon, &c. &c.*

CORTÉZ.

Throughout the line give forth command to halt.

(The word is given.)

OROZIMBO.

Illustrious leader of this pow'rful host,
 Who, from the chambers of the glowing east,
 Hast o'er the ocean held thy daring course,
 With Montezuma, our imperial lord,
 To form alliance and immortal friendship,
 I hail thy presence at his royal seat.
 Here for a few brief moments stay thy march,
 And his approach await.—Lo ! he arrives.

(Wild martial music.

*Enter Montezuma, on a magnificent litter carried by twelve
 Caciques ; Guatimozin, Priests, Warriors, &c. The
 Spaniards salute him as he descends—his attendants draw
 up opposite to them.—Cortez advances towards Montezuma.*

MONTEZUMA.

Welcome, thrice welcome art thou, noble stranger !
 Accept this pledge (*presents his hand*), as symbol of my
 friendship.

CORTEZ.

I take it thankfully, most royal sir,
 And in return presume to tender mine,
 As surety of my faith and humble duty.
 I am a plain, blunt soldier, little us'd
 To courts and all their tinsel braveries :
 Take me for what I am, for one whose tongue
 Ne'er was at variance with his heart, who feels

With gratitude thy lib'ral confidence,
And will with equal confidence repay it.

MONTEZUMA.

I doubt thee not—I have already proof on't.
While here thy sojourn lasts, we shall have leisure
To arrange our treaty, and confirm alliance
With the great monarch of the eastern world,
From whom thou bear'st commission. Know, meanwhile,
A spacious palace, in old time th' abode
Of my progenitors, is set apart
For the reception of thy warlike followers.
Within its ample bounds, embattled still,
Securely may they rest. All is provided
For their fair entertainment. For thyself,
My dwelling, like my heart, is open to thee.
Thither, I pray thee, let me straight conduct thee.

CORTEZ.

Feeling thy gracious kindness as becomes me,
I must perforce decline the high distinction
Thy favour would bestow. I must maintain
Strict discipline, lest, as my troops are strangers,
And uninform'd of your peculiar customs,
As are your Mexicans of our's, some chance
Unlook'd-for might occur, which may disturb
The harmony which ought to reign between them.
For this day, royal sir, grant me thy licence

To sojourn with my people, who are us'd
To my controul, and will obey my orders.
To-morrow will I visit thee betimes—

MONTEZUMA.

Do what beseems thee best, and rest assur'd
Our royal care shall watch for thy protection.
Here, Orozimbo—to thy charge I give
The noble Cortez and his gallant train;
Conduct them to their residence, and see
That nought be wanting for their fair reception.
Farewell—to-morrow I expect to see thee.

CORTEZ.

'Till then I humbly take my leave.—Velasquez
Give word to march, and, as our forces pass
The royal station, be such honour paid
As the imperial dignity requires.

*[Cortez and his troops march off with martial
music, saluting Montezuma as they pass, who
then retires as he came on.]*

SCENE II.

An Apartment in Montezuma's Palace.

Enter Zelama and Telasco.

ZELAMA.

Come, my lov'd friend, for so I now can term thee,

Beneath this roof, which witness'd our first vows,
 I greet thee once again our country's champion.
 Haste hither, Montezuma! to thy bosom
 Take my Telasco, hail him as thy brother.

TELASCO.

His brother! Sure there's magic in the sound.
 Am I so blest? Speak it again—confirm it—
 Tell me that all the visions of delight
 Which rush upon my aching soul are true,
 That I indeed behold thee, that this hand,
 This tender yielding hand, at last is mine.
 Oh! speak—compose my agitated senses,
 Or, if too strong the mighty flood of joy
 For my swoln heart to bear, let me expire
 With such a foretaste of eternal bliss!

ZELAMA.

Oh rather live to justify my choice,
 To win renown, and save thy menac'd country!—
 See—the proud moment of my triumph's come,
 For lo! my brother—

Enter Montezuma.

Welcome, trebly welcome!
 Now can I hail thee king indeed! Behold
 Our pledge of safety, Mexico's best hope,
 Telasco!

MONTEZUMA.

How! I look'd not here to meet him,

Leagued as he was against me.

ZELAMA.

(*To Telasco*)—I implore thee,
 Restrain thyself awhile.—True, my best brother;
 He was misled: for is he not a man,
 With human frailties and with human passions?
 Thou know'st the griefs, I term them not the wrongs,
 Which drove him from thee: in his feeling soul
 Deeply they rankled; his rejected love,
 His blighted hopes fermented in his mind,
 And vengeance fir'd his bosom, when this Spaniard
 Lur'd him with gay delusive promises—

MONTEZUMA.

Who was't that lur'd him back?

ZELAMA.

I, I, my brother!

Mine was the glorious task, and mine the triumph.
 I knew his worth, knew that his noble soul
 Was still untainted: 'mid the hostile camp
 I sought him, prov'd him, and have found him true.

TELASCO.

Like a bright seraph from high heav'n descending
 With my redemption's tidings charg'd she came,
 Restor'd me to myself, sav'd me from ruin,
 And broke the compact which despair had form'd.
 Oh she is all, that in her kindest mood

Nature e'er fram'd, or fancy can pourtray !
 Sense, judgment, fortitude, angelic softness,
 Whate'er proud man of excellence can boast,
 Or fascinating woman most can grace,
 Combine in her. She, she was my preserver,
 She sav'd my honour, brought me back to thee—

MONTEZUMA.

Come to my heart ! Henceforth may ev'ry thought
 Hostile to friendship be for ever banish'd !
 (*To Zelama*)—Tell me how best I can return the gift
 Which thou hast brought me. Do I rightly read
 That eye, which mutely eloquent speaks more
 Than words can utter ? Is not this fair hand
 Our surest pledge and bond of amity ?
 That smile confirms it.—Take it, brave Telasco,
 Take it, my more than valued friend, my brother !

TELASCO.

'Tis mine ! 'tis mine ! Now fortune do thy worst—
 I am beyond thy pow'r. (*To Montezuma*) By this dear hand,
 I am thine own. Command me ; tax my service
 To all that man can do, or nature dare.
 I'd bare my bosom to heav'n's angry bolt,
 To ward it off from thee !

MONTEZUMA.

Thanks, my good brother !
 But proofs like this the time requires not now.

The cloud which gather'd o'er us is dispers'd.
With friendly purposes these Spaniards come.

TELASCO.

I joy to hear it : but observe them still,
For they're possess'd of such gigantic means
Of working harm, arms of such fatal pow'r,
Such potent empire o'er the elements
Of air and fire, that, should their projects prove
Hostile to Mexico, our utmost force
Might fail to oppose them.

MONTEZUMA.

Are they then so dreadful,
So irresistible?

TELASCO.

Thou'st known me long—
I need not tell thee I've been us'd to war,
How often in the bloody field I've fac'd
The primest force our Indian clime can boast;
But ne'er 'till now did I behold such warriors :
They seem above mortality ; each man
Bears a charm'd life—

MONTEZUMA.

Whate'er may be their pow'rs,
They touch not us. I have their leader's faith,
His solemn oath ; I hold him as my hostage
For its observance ; he hath giv'n himself

As pledge and warrantry of future peace.

TELASCO.

I trust he's honest. When I spoke with him,
His words were friendly ; and, though he express'd
A fearless confidence in his own strength,
He seem'd dispos'd to shun hostility.

MONTEZUMA.

So spoke he to myself.

TELASCO.

And yet I know not—

Perhaps I wrong him ; but fair words may cloak
A treach'rous purpose. 'Tis for his advantage,
If he mean ill, to blind us.

ZELAMA.

Can ye doubt it ?

Can ye give credit to a specious fiction,
Which the whole tenor of their course disproves ?
Look round, and trace their devastating progress—
They have invaded us—the calm abodes
Of our poor countrymen they have destroy'd—
Pillage and booty are their open object—
They preach the doctrine of revolt—their hands
Are reeking with the blood of innocents—

MONTEZUMA.

'Tis true—so have we found them—

ZELAMA.

Will ye then

Repose in false security, while thus
Treason and all her direst train of ills
Are secretly at work, to raise a storm
Which may o'erwhelm you ?

MONTEZUMA.

What would'st have me do ?

My oath is plighted for these Spaniards' safety.

TELASCO.

Maintain it firmly, but in time prepare
Means of prevention, should suspicion end
In dreadful certainty. That task be mine.
I will go forth, and make such fit arrangements
As caution prompts.

MONTEZUMA.

Delay not, I beseech thee.

I trust myself, my Mexico to thee.

TELASCO.

Enough—I go. When danger is foreseen,
'Tis half averted.—Farewell, my Zelama!
Wish me success, and 'tis already mine.

[Exit.]

SCENE III.

*Cortez's Palace in Mexico.**Enter Cortez, Velasquez, and Officers.*

CORTEZ.

Welcome to Mexico, my gallant friends!

Had we on yester morn but dar'd to hope
 That here our Spanish standard should be rear'd,
 Who had not mock'd us?

VELASQUEZ,

True—beyond the scope
 Of expectation hath our fortune prov'd,
 But still my mind misgives me.—We're alone;
 Telasco's force remains without the walls;
 These Mexicans—

CORTEZ.

Dismiss such idle fears!

Trust to our fortune.

VELASQUEZ.

Fortune! She's a female;
 And therefore prone to change. She now may smile,
 But who can tell what she may prove to-morrow?
 What if she should become our foe?

CORTEZ,

Why then
 We'll conquer her.—But wherefore trifle we?

Each to his post—be watchful.—[*Exeunt officers.*]—Hist
Velasquez!

Remain.—When I reflect, my good Velasquez,
On what thou said'st, I must perforce confess
Our state is critical and hazardous.

VELASQUEZ.

Were I sole guider of our enterprize
I would insure success. We have the means,
If we but dare to use them: but the moments,
Which we can call our own, are few and brief.
At present, these dull Mexicans believe us
Invincible, all-powerful and immortal;
But rumour speedily will disabuse them,
When they shall hear of poor Gonsalvo's fate,
Who, with brave Alvarado and his party,
Was slain as o'er the mountains we advanc'd.

CORTEZ.

There's much in what thou say'st. I will think on't,
And tell thee more—[*starts*]—May I believe mine eyes?
Look—'tis himself—it is, it is Gonsalvo!

Enter Gonsalvo.

GONSALVO.

Again with joy my gen'ral I salute.

CORTEZ.

Thou'rt welcome—I ne'er thought to see thee more.
How did'st thou escape the bloody crew who chas'd thee?

G O N S A L V O.

With Alvarado singly I took refuge
 In a thick wood, where an old Indian met us,
 And gave us shelter in his humble cottage. .
 Had we been friends, had not our hands been crimson'd
 With the fresh blood of his own countrymen,
 He could not with more kindness have reliev'd us.

V E L A S Q U E Z.

When last I saw thee, such were not the terms
 Wherein thou spok'st of Indians.

G O N S A L V O.

True—I knew not
 The mild humanity that grac'd their nature,
 Hads't thou experienc'd half the tenderness,
 Which this poor savage shew'd me in distress,
 Thy soul had felt it.

V E L A S Q U E Z.

Thank my better stars!
 Such feelings touch not me. I came not hither
 To whine and whimper like a puling girl,
 But to repair injurious fortune's wrongs,
 And in these golden climes to reap my harvest.

C O R T E Z.

What 'came of Alvarado?

G O N S A L V O.

Fruitless prov'd
 Our utmost care. His pilgrimage is o'er.

A TRAGEDY.

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CORTEZ.

Peace to his shade! He was a gallant soldier.
How cam'st thou here?

GONSALVO.

With the cacique Telasco.

CORTEZ.

Is he in Mexico?

GONSALVO.

Had'st thou not notice
Of his intent?—He seems a pow'rful chief,
Of gallant bearing, and expert in arms.
I took th' occasion of his coming hither
To enter with his train. He's well attended,
For with him came the sister of the king—

CORTEZ.

Where did they bend their course?

GONSALVO.

Straight to the palace.

Their presence seem'd to give a general joy—

CORTEZ.

No doubt on't—'tis too plain—all were confed'rate
To take us blindfold—

VELASQUEZ.

What's our fortune now?

I gave thee warning—I was sure some devil
Would cross our path. How could she get to him?

CORTÉZ.

No matter how. . . Sure nought could have occur'd, /
More fatal to our plan—How now—Salceda!

Enter Salceda.

Thy looks are ominous—

SALCEDA.

They suit my tidings.

Telasco marches through the crowded streets,
Calling on all the citizens to arm—

CORTÉZ.

Look to our posts—See that the guards be doubled—
Point our artillery, so that each discharge
May mow down hundreds—let the gunners stand
With lighted kinestocks, ready for the word!
Velasquez! order thy detachment but,
And follow me. Now is the crisis come—
Our fortunes all are set upon one cast,
And death or victory the great stake we play for!

Exit.

SCENE IV.

Montezuma's Palace.

Enter Montezuma.

MONTÉZUMA.

Thank heav'n! the horrors of suspense are over,
And peace, too long a stranger to my bosom, is

Again revisits my distemper'd heart.
 Like mine own subject lake, when hush'd the billows
 That ruffled its smooth surface, my vex'd mind
 Resumes its customary calm. The Spaniard
 Commits himself to me, a willing hostage,
 Bound by strong oaths of lasting amity.
 Telasco too—He is himself a host,
 Unmatch'd in arms, the idol of the people.
 While I have him—and he is now mine own—
 I fear no foes; I am invincible,
 And laugh at the vain legends of my priests,
 Who in the hour of peril, when strange fears
 Disturb'd my wayward fancy, wrought upon me,
 And with their wild chimeras rack'd my brain.

Enter Oroximbo.

Well—what report'st thou of our new allies?

OROXIMBO.

When I had executed my commission,
 I left them to repose. They seem'd well pleas'd
 With what thy princely bounty had provided,
 And, as I came away, their leader, Cortez,
 Charg'd me to bear to thee his grateful thanks,
 And humble hope that thou would'st still continue
 To him and his thy favour and protection.

MONTREZUMA.

He may rely upon't.—Thou may'st retire.

[Exit Oroximbo.]

This gallant Spaniard merits all my care :
 He shall have ample proofs of my esteem
 Ere he depart, more than his hopes e'er aim'd at.
 What if I go to him ? 'Twere well imagin'd.
 An honour so unlook'd for would excite
 A strong sensation in his gen'rous heart.
 I'll do it instantly—But, as I live,
 Hither he comes.

Enter Cortez, Velasquez, and Soldiers.

Welcome, most noble Cortez !

Thou hast forestall'd my purpose. I had plann'd
 To visit thee.

C O R T E Z.

I could not wait thy leisure.
 Stubborn necessity, which o'erleaps rule,
 Compell'd me hither.—Prince ! thou hast deceiv'd me.

M O N T E Z U M A.

I a deceiver !

C O R T E Z.

Yes—thou and thy people
 With treach'rous purpose 'gainst me have conspir'd.
 Are not thy troops on ev'ry hand assembling ?

M O N T E Z U M A.

Dismiss such groundless fears : they are unworthy
 Of a great soul like thine. Thou hast my faith.

C O R T E Z.

I have, and now can estimate it rightly.

But wherefore lose we time in vain discourse?
I come not here to parley : no smooth words,
No specious promises will now avail thee.
I must have more substantial evidence
Of thy sincerity.

MONTEZUMA.

What dost require ?

CORTEZ.

Such as alone can give security :
A hostage—an effective pledge—thymself.
Go with us to our fortress.

MONTEZUMA.

I go with you ?

Give myself up a captive ? This to me,
To Montezuma ? Am I bearded thus
In mine own palace ?—Ho ! my guards !

CORTEZ.

Be silent !

Breathe but a word, and to thy inmost heart
Shall pierce my weapon.—Circle him around !
Forward !—Now, Mexico, I have secur'd thee !

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A public Place in Mexico.

Enter Telasco, Orozimbo, and Soldiers.

SOLDIERS.

Long live Telasco!

OROZIMBO.

Silence! See ye not

He waves his hand, as if he will'd to address you?

Exit Orozimbo. **TELASCO.**

Friends, citizens, ~~rein in~~ awhile the ardour
Which ~~thus incites~~ you to assert the cause
Of Montezuma, of your menac'd country,
Your children and yourselves, and list to me.
Should the time come, when, to preserve those pledges,
Your service is requir'd, stand forth like men,
Unsheath your swords, and cast away your scabbards.
Meantime, let prudence guide you. While these strangers
Offend us not, while with observance due
They keep their faith with us, do not forget

They are your guests, who have a claim on you
 For lib'ral succour and assur'd protection.
 Here then keep station, under arms remain,
 With faith untainted heedful of the truce
 By Montezuma with these strangers made,
 But ever watchful, vigilant, alert—

Enter Guatimozin.

GUATIMOZIN.

Where is Telasco?—Oh my gallant friend!
 Fate on our heads its deadliest vengeance pours:
 Worse than whate'er our anxious fears presag'd,
 Our faithless foes have perpetrated.—~~Haste!~~
 As thou'rt a man, exert thyself to save
 Our wrong'd, our captiv'd king!

TELASCO.

Captiv'd?

GUATIMOZIN.

Aye, captiv'd—

Scarce had we left him, when the Spaniards came—
 Cortez himself their band perfidious led—
 With impious hands they seiz'd him—

TELASCO.

In his palace?

Surrounded by his guard? Impossible!

GUATIMOZIN.

I marvel not thou doubt'st it. 'Tis beyond

All credence.—List to me.—When they beheld
 Their monarch thus insulted, his attendants
 Indignantly rushed forward to his aid.
 As they approach'd, Cortez with air resolv'd
 Advanc'd. With his left hand he grasp'd the king,
 While in his right his threat'ning sword he brandish'd.
 "Keep off," he cried, "if any make resistance,
 "Deep in your monarch's heart I plunge my blade!"
 They heard him, and fell back.

TELASCO.

Oh cowards, traitors!

Was there not one, not one among them all
 Of texture firm enough to dare his threats?—
 What! All desert him! No one stand by him!
 Oh shame, shame, shame!—It maddens me to think
 Of such unblushing cow'rdice!—Where is he?
 Where have the ruffians ta'en him?

GUATIMOZIN.

To their fort.

There he remains, while in array their forces
 Stand marshall'd 'gainst us.

TELASCO.

He may yet be sav'd!

On to the charge, my friends! Let's strike them home—

GUATIMOZIN.

Stay yet awhile, I pray thee. Are we sure

To what extent of dread atrocity
These ruffians may be driv'n, should we by force
Attempt our king's release ?—They may be urg'd
To perpetrate a still more dreadful deed—

TELASCO.

They dare not touch his consecrated head :
The guardian spirit of our realm will watch
Over his life, and sanction our endeavours.
One course alone remains for us, and that,
Thank heav'n ! we've nerves and courage to fulfil.
Let us assail them manfully, and teach them
What men can do when honour goads them on.

GUATIMOZIN.

Lead us against them. Him who first deserts thee
With endless ruin may the gods o'erwhelm !

TELASCO.

On then—Our cause is that of heav'n itself.
Oh thou, great spirit ! whose protecting hand
Rules o'er our destiny, inspire us now !
Ward from our sacred king the felon brand
Levell'd by treason 'gainst him ! But should fate
Frustrate our hopes, oh ! let us live to glory,
Or die like heroes !—Forward, my brave friends !

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

*Cortez's Palace.**Enter Cortez, Velasquez, and Salceda.*

CORTÉZ.

So far, so well—Now to derive advantage
 From our great prize.—Salceda, take thou charge
 Of our illustrious captive, as our hostage
 To insure us favourable terms, should fortune
 Grow adverse to us. See thou guard'at him well.

Exit Salceda.

Velasquez! are the battlements well lin'd,
 And is sufficient force drawn up without,
 Should any try to force a sudden entrance?

VELASQUEZ.

Aye—let them try it—they shall learn a lesson
 Will teach them wisdom.—Talk of petty Indians!
 They face such men as we!—Did'st thou not note them,
 When through their ranks we led their trembling king,
 How with astonishment they gaz'd on us,
 And shook like aspens in a northern blast?
 No, no—they'll not presume to cope with us.

CORTÉZ.

We know not yet what desp'rate men may do.
 The timid stag, who flies the rav'nous pack,
 When hardly press'd will boldly stand at bay,

And in his turn become aggressor.—Well—

Enter Gonsalvo.

What new intelligence?

GONSALVO.

None of good import.

The citizens are up in arms—the streets
Are fill'd with multitudes—far as the ear
Can catch the sounds, clamours and shouts are heard,
The clarion's piercing bray, cymbals and drums,
As if from every quarter were assembling
A congregated force for their king's rescue.

CORTEZ.

Such beyond doubt is what they meditate.
It is a critical and awful moment—[*He stands musing.*

GONSALVO.

'Tis now too late to remedy the evils
Yet think I still the better course had been
To treat indulgently this friendly people
And guard against the worst.

VELASQUEZ.

Indulgence!—But I do remember me—
Thou art converted! Sympathy, fine feelings,
Are now it seems the fashion—

GONSALVO.

I shall find

A time more fit to notice those proud taunts

C O R T E Z.

Fie on such jars! Is this a time for squabbles,
When a whole empire is combin'd against us?
Give o'er, I pray.—Who is it heads their forces?

G O N S A L V O.

On ev'ry hand resounds Telasco's name.

C O R T E Z.

Aye—he's a leader who will find us work.
Hark! heard ye not?—They are already here.
Louder and louder still!—Now is our time:
Let us not tamely their assault await.
Do thou, Velasquez! sally forth: assail them;
To Montezuma's palace force thy way;
Maintain it as thy post—

V E L A S Q U E Z.

'Twill be a prize
Worth running risk for, and I thank thee for it.
I'll forth o' th' instant.—Farewell, moralizer!
If thou'rt in earnest, we shall meet again.

G O N S A L V O.

We will, be sure on't.

C O R T E Z.

Heed him not. He's rough
But a brave soldier.—I must forth myself—
We all must bear our parts.—Summon my guards—

Now may St. James and Spanish valour aid us !

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

A public place in Mexico.

[*Shouts, Trumpets, Horns, &c. heard in various directions. Indians running across the Stage, pursued by Spaniards.*]

Enter Velasquez and Zelama.

VELASQUEZ.

Think not to 'scape me—Thou art fairly mine—
I won thee, and will keep thee.

ZELAMA.

Oh in pity !

If thou can'st feel compassion—if thy heart—

VELASQUEZ.

This prud'ry is mistim'd—I hold thee fast—
Let's see who'll rescue thee !

ZELAMA.

Hear me, oh hear me !

VELASQUEZ.

What ! when thy beauties fire my soul ?—No, no—
Come on—This is no place to parley in—

ZELAMA.

Where art thou, my Telasco !

Enter Gonsalvo.

(Zelama breaks from Velasquez, and runs to him.)

Gen'rous stranger!!

Thou art not like thy fellows—Thou canst feel—

Save me! Protect me!

GONSALVO.

Heav'n! Zelama here!

By what strange chance—Who tore thee from thy palace?

VELASQUEZ.

'Twas I! Velasquez! As with my brave comrades
Through Montezuma's halls I rang'd, I found her.

I left to other care his gems and gold,

And seiz'd her for myself.

GONSALVO.

Shame on the deed!

VELASQUEZ.

Wilt thou dispute her with me? I remember

Thou seem'd'st dispos'd to pick a quarrel with me.

If yet thy valour be awake, this may be

As good a cause as any.

GONSALVO.

Hence! be gone!

I'm her protector—touch her if thou dar'st.

VELASQUEZ.

These words to me?—Come on then—take thy fate!

(They fight.)

Enter Telasco, with his force.

GONSALVO.

Retreat'st thou?

VELASQUEZ (*pointing to Telasco*).

See'st him not?—What demon sent him

Here with his myrmidons?—This is no time

For private tilting.—We shall meet again. [*Exit.*

ZELAMA.

Oh my Telasco!

TELASCO.

My Zelama here!

ZELAMA.

Now am I safe—

TELASCO.

Have then these ruffians dar'd—

But they shall answer for it.

ZELAMA.

Stop—forbear—

Aim not thy sword against him—he's my protector.

When the fierce Spaniards broke into the palace,

A stern barbarian seiz'd me as his prey.

Deaf to my cries, and reckless of my tears,

Here had he forc'd me on, when pitying heav'n

Sent this young warrior to mine aid. He sav'd me.

TELASCO.

Myriads of blessings light upon him for it!

How can I thank thee best?

GONSALVO.

I've done no more

Than mere humanity requir'd. The soldier,
Who sees a lovely woman in distress
And flies not to her succour, is unworthy
Of that proud title.

TELASCO.

Thou art truly noble

'Tis pity thou'rt a Spaniard. I had sworn
To hate all those who bear that odious name ;
But I cannot hate thee. No—by this hand
I love thee, and will recompence thy service.

GONSALVO.

I ask no recompence but mine own feelings,
And those are amply gratified already.
Farewell—another duty calls me hence.

ZELAMA.

Wilt thou then leave us?

GONSALVO.

Ask me not to stay.

Thou need'st no help ; Telasco's arm protects thee.
But there's another and a graver cause
Which hurries me away. Thy Montezuma—
I know not what new perils may assail him.
My presence may—

ZELAMA.

Oh stay not, I implore thee!

Lose not a moment—fly—

GONSALVO.

I will obey thee. [Exit.

ZELAMA.

Heav'n's blessing light on thee, thou gen'rous youth!—

Where can I turn me now?

TELASCO.

I will conduct thee

Back to the palace.

ZELAMA.

There's no safety there.

The cruel Spaniards are its masters now.

I have no friend to save me but thyself.

Thou wilt not leave me?

TELASCO.

No! While this heart beats,

Mine arm shall guard thee. Come with me, my love—

Take courage—None shall harm thee. Since fate wills it,

We will together face the storm of war.

(To his followers)—Behold, my gallant comrades, your
new leader,

Your monarch's sister, now become associate

In the brave cause which animates us all!

Follow her steps to glory and to conquest! (Loud cries.

ZELAMA.

Alas! What mean those shouts, those piercing cries?
'Tis from the Spanish fort they come—My brother!
My hapless brother!—Hear'st thou?—There again—

Enter Capana.

CAPANA.

Oh day for ever curs'd!—Alas! I come
Charg'd with intelligence to rend your hearts.

ZELAMA.

It was! It was! My boding soul foretold it.

TELASCO.

Be not thus agitated.—Speak, I charge thee.

CAPANA.

When our brave troops had nearly scal'd the fort,
The warrior, who commanded on the summit,
Brought forth our king, and plac'd him in the front,
Where rag'd the strife most hotly. Struck with awe
Our host th' assault suspended; when the king
Address'd them—said he came there willingly—

TELASCO.

It cannot be—He never could say so—

CAPANA.

Our people seem'd confounded—

TELASCO.

Well they might—

ZELAMA.

Oh ! interrupt him not—

CAPANA.

A mournful silence

Reign'd for a moment ; but, when they beheld
 Their king surrounded by his foes, disrob'd
 Of royal state, and as a captive led
 To plead against himself, their fury rose—
 A show'r of arrows—Can I say't?—He fell !

ZELAMA.

Curs'd be the hand which struck his sacred life !
 My brain's on fire !—Oh brother ! Montezuma !

[She faints.]

TELASCO.

Thy fatal words have pierc'd her to the heart.
 Oh ! bear her from this scene of misery,
 Defend, protect her in this hour of trial,
 Find, if thou canst, some refuge for her woes,
 'Till heav'n the doom of Mexico decide.

[Capana bears her off.]

Now, fate, thy worst is over—Come all the terrors
 Which our indignant gods can pour upon us !
 Havock, destruction, horror, and dismay,
 Now we defy you. On to the proof, my friends !
 —~~Rip~~ like a torrent on these perjur'd Spaniards—
 See where they come propitious to my wish—

And Cortez at their head—

Enter Cortez and Soldiers.

Turn, base dissembler!

Behold Telasco dares thee to the proof!

This blade shall reach thy trait'rous heart—

C O R T E Z.

Away!

I scorn a foe like thee, thee whom the tongue

Of a weak, wheedling woman could seduce.

T E L A S C O.

Tax me with breach of faith! You heav'n, which witness'd

Thy monstrous perjuries, will nerve my arm

To wreak just vengeance for a murder'd king—

C O R T E Z.

Take then the fate thou tempt'st—

[They fight. Telasco falls.]

T E L A S C O.

Thou hast prevail'd—

C O R T E Z.

First to thy sov'reign faithless, then to me,

What else could'st thou expect?

T E L A S C O.

Rail on! Upbraid me

For having thought thee honest—hence! begone!

Thy sight is hateful to me—

CORTEZ.

Fare thee well.

On, my brave friends, to conquest and to glory!

[*Exeunt Cortez and Soldiers.*]

TELASCO.

Oh my poor country! Must these cruel spoilers
Thus triumph o'er thy downfall?—Guatimozin!

[*Enter Guatimozin and Soldiers.*]

Thou'rt come in time to take my last adieu—

GUATIMOZIN.

Oh my Telasco! Is it thus I meet thee?

Let me convey thee hence—

TELASCO.

Thy cares are vain—

This mortal conflict shortly will be o'er,

And I shall rest.—Defend our hapless country—

Avenge our murder'd king—and if Zelama—

Why that averted eye—that heaving breast?

Is she—speak quickly—

GUATIMOZIN.

All her cares are over.

Her brother's fate seal'd hers.

TELASCO.

High heav'n be thank'd!

Oh my Zelama! my belov'd! farewell!

Farewell a little space!—Though here we part,

Ne'er in this cruel world to meet again,
 In those blest realms of rapturous delight,
 Where joys eternal wait on suff'ring virtue,
 Our disembodied souls, again united,
 Shall meet to part no more!—Give me thy hand—
 My breath grows short—a film comes o'er mine eyes—
 Our country—Mexico—protect it!—oh!—(*Dies.*)
[*Exeunt omnes.*]

THE END.

THE
STORM.

A COMEDY.

BY
JAMES BOURN.

Sunt mea, quæ vovi, sunt tibi vota rata.

BOURN: POEM:

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Men.

MONTALBAN.

FERDINAND.

DON LOPEZ DE GONGORA.

RODERIGO, Steward at De Silva Castle.

GUZMAN, Surgeon at ditto.

GOMEZ, Don Lopez's Servant.

SANCHO, } Peasants.

PEDRO, }

Women.

DONNA VICTORIA.

DONNA CLARA, her Niece.

MARGARETTA, Housekeeper at De Silva Castle.

TERESA, a Peasant.

Scene.—Andalusia.

THE
S T O R M.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

The Sea-shore. A violent Storm, with a Vessel at a distance.

Enter Sancho and Teresa.

SANCHO.

FASTER, good dame, let's try to gain some shelter;
There's no resisting this tremendous storm.

Enter Pedro.

Pedro ! What brings thee here in this foul weather ?

PEDRO.

I sought some straggling goats, that from my herd
Had wander'd to the cliffs ; but now, by th' mass !
They may return, or stay there as they list.

TERESA.

Saint Bridget save us! How the light'ning flashes!
See there again! Marry, 'tis time to go.

Enter Ferdinand and Roderigo.

FERDINAND,

This way, my Roderigo! See, where stand
The peasants of our hamlet, wonder-stricken,
All gazing on the elemental strife
Which harrows up the ocean.

RODERIGO.

Aye, aye, give 'em
But something new to stare at, they will leave
Their tasks unfinish'd to turn out and wonder,
Why stand ye gaping here, ye idle knaves!
Your daily labours incomplete, your ploughs
Left in the half-till'd fields—

FERDINAND.

Nay, chide them not;
Think not less nobly of their gen'rous feelings
Than of our own.

RODERIGO.

Aye, so you always say—

TERESA.

The poor man's blessing light upon you for it,
And the poor woman's too! You're always kind,
And treat the mean dependents on your bounty.

With courtesy, as if they were your equals.

FERDINAND.

And are ye not so? From a peasant's breast
An infant prince may draw his nutriment;
And servile hands may swathe his puny limbs,
And smooth his couch. The proud magnifico,
Who battens on the good things of the world,
Looks to the lab'ring hind who tills his acres
For the foundation of his wealth and state,
While he, his task performed, from him in turn
Receives the guerdon which maintains himself.
Thus are our wants and aids reciprocal;
And thus far are we equal.

RODERIGO.

You had best
Not put such fancies in their heads. I know em—
They're apt enough to spurn authority,
And do not want your teaching. In my mind,
Some mod'rate censure on their sauciness,
Were more to th' purpose.

FERDINAND.

Talk not thus, I pray,
To one like me, who am myself dependent.
But we lose time. See, where amid the waves
Yon vessel struggles with the tempest's fury.
Now borne along, now whelmed beneath the billows,

Her sails all shiver'd, tow'rd's the shore she drives.

PEDRO.

Nay, if she drive much farther she must strike.
While thus the tempest rages, she will find
A rough reception on our iron coast.

SANCHO.

Saint Anthony defend us! There's a plunge!
Her masts are all gone by the board!—She strikes!

FERDINAND.

Now, if you've hearts or feelings, follow me
Quick to the strand.

RODERIGO.

You will not be so rash—

FERDINAND.

What! When our fellow-creatures are in peril
To think of our own danger!—Come, my friends!
Shew what ye are. Should the high-mounting surf
Cast any on the beach, we may preserve them!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

An Apartment in De Silva Castle.

Enter Donna Victoria.

VICTORIA.

With what dread majesty the tempest rages,
As if the skies were rending, and the earth

Were hurl'd from its firm base! It is most dreadful!
 Yet I can bear it unappall'd, can see
 The forked lightning strike yon promontory
 Which overhangs the ocean, nor shrink back
 T' escape th' impending peril. Can affliction
 Thus render us insensible? Alas!
 Too surely such our feeble nature is,
 The sport of accident, the toy of fortune,
 Which takes its tone and colour from events,
 And makes us, poor chamelions, vary with them.

Enter Clara.

CLARA.

Oh my dear madam! Are no news arriv'd
 Of our rash Ferdinand?

VICTORIA.

Is he gone forth?

CLARA.

An hour ago, as from the western oriel
 I gaz'd on the vext sea, I saw him go.

VICTORIA.

You should have urg'd him to return

CLARA.

I call'd to him,

And begg'd him not to go, but all in vain.

He us'd to mind me; but he's grown self-will'd.

When he comes dripping home and chill'd with cold,

He'll think perhaps that I'll take care of him—

VICTORIA.

Peace, foolish girl! When Ferdinand returns,
He'll find you fond as ever. You forget
He now no longer is the trifling boy,
Who shar'd your pastimes, and with eagerness
Partook of all your infantine amusements.
Full sixteen summers are elaps'd, since first
I brought him hither. You was then a babe,
And he a prattling child, blooming and fair,
Who toy'd with you, and taught you first to speak,
At once your play-fellow and best instructor.
But now, the consciousness of manhood stirs him
To new pursuits more worthy of his years :
His enterprizing spirit pants for action—

CLARA.

Why should he wish for change? I could, methinks,
Live here for ever, so he liv'd here too.
You will not let him leave us, madam, will you?
I know how tenderly you love him.

VICTORIA.

Yes!

From the first moment he became the child
Of my adoption, I have never ceas'd
To love him as mine own; and well his duty
Hath all my watchful tenderness repaid.

Poor Ferdinand! thou hast indeed a claim
On my best feelings!

CLARA.

I have oft remark'd
That you will gaze upon him, 'till your eyes
O'erflow with tears, and from your heaving breast
A sigh will burst, as if of stifled sorrow;
And when I ask'd what caus'd you thus to grieve,
You made me no reply, but gave a look
So sad—

VICTORIA.

Ah my lov'd niece! Could I disclose
The secret cause of ~~was~~, which, spite of all
My self-command, sometimes o'erpow'rs me,
I should but wring thy feeling heart.

CLARA.

Oh no!

Could I but share your grief, I might relieve it.
But why should Ferdinand thus cause you pain?
He never troubles me, unless when thus
He disregards himself. Do tell me, madam,
What has he ever done to move you so?

VICTORIA.

Alas, my Clara! there's a secret cause,
Which cannot be disclos'd, but which, whene'er

I look upon him, brings to my remembrance
Such mournful images, as time itself
Cannot remove or cure.

CLARA.

Dear lady, weep not.
I'm sure, could our good Ferdinand but know
How for his sake you grieve, he'd chide himself
For causing you disquiet. Never breast
Contain'd a heart more gentle or more brave.

Enter Roderigo.

Oh Roderigo! where is Ferdinand?

RODERIGO.

I left him in Teresa's cottage yonder,
Down by the beach. He bad me hasten hither,
To tell my lady he was safe.

CLARA.

How's that?

To tell he's safe? Has he been then in peril?

RODERIGO.

If, when the sea was raging mountains high,
To plunge head-foremost in the madd'ning surf
To save a drowning wretch, be perilous,
Then hath he been in peril.

VICTORIA.

Prithce tell me,

What cause impell'd him to an enterprize
So hazardous and daring ?

RODERIGO.

Truly, lady,
There was a cause, which, to a mind that priz'd
His neighbour's safety higher than his own,
Was strong enough in conscience. For myself,
Though I can find in heart to serve a friend,
My notion is—

CLARA.

Pshaw! What is that to us?

RODERIGO.

Nay, give me leave, I pray. My notion is,
That charity begins at home.

VICTORIA.

Nay, nay,
Tell us at once thy story.

RODERIGO.

When the storm
With tenfold fury rag'd, he drew me forth,
To see, forsooth, whether some luckless bark
Driv'n on the coast might not require our aid :
As if a poor old man, like me, could brave
The tempest which our castle's turrets shook.
Well—he persuaded me—I could not help it.

CLARA.

Don't be so tedious! What of Ferdinand?

RODERIGO.

When to the first o'er-hanging cliff we came,
We saw a vessel driving on the coast.
In shorter time than I can tell the tale,
Headlong she came on a projecting rock,
And down she sank outright.

VICTORIA.

Alas for pity!

Sank do you say? With all her crew aboard?

CLARA.

What became of them?

RODERIGO.

What became of one

I witness'd, and can tell. As the ship founder'd,
I saw him boldly leap into the sea,
And buffet manfully the waves: but soon,
Caught in the surf, he sank.

CLARA.

He perish'd too!

RODERIGO.

He would have perish'd, had not Ferdinand
Rush'd forward to his succour. Swift as thought
He dash'd into the roaring surf, and drew him

Exhausted to the beach. But see—he comes.

Enter Ferdinand.

VICTORIA.

Welcome, my gallant boy!

CLARA.

Oh Ferdinand!

How could you, like a wild thing as you are,
Alarm us so? Had the rude sea o'erwhelm'd you,
You know it would have broke your Clara's heart.

FERDINAND.

My lovely friend, be satisfied. I'm safe,
And, as you know what pow'ful motive led me
To dare the waves, you surely cannot blame me.

CLARA.

In sooth I do not blame you; but remember,
You must not be so rash again.

RODERIGO.

You may

As well exhort him not to eat or sleep.
I verily believe he has no feeling
Of that first principle, self-preservation;
And, what's worse still, he thinks all others should
Be equally fool-hardy as himself.
He wanted me, forsooth, I thank him for it,
To try how I could gambol in the surf,
And fish for dead men's corpses.

FERDINAND.

If I did,

My pains were fruitless. You have liv'd so long,
That you are grown enamour'd of existence,
And, in proportion as your glass runs low,
You prize more highly each remaining sand.

VICTORIA.

But tell us of the man you sav'd from death.
Where left you him?

FERDINAND.

When on the beach I drew him,
He had no signs of life; but we convey'd him
To good Teresa's cottage, where her care
In some degree restor'd his scatter'd senses.

VICTORIA.

Haste, Roderigo, summon Guzman hither,
And Margaretta. *[Exit Roderigo.]*

Now it is our turn

To perfect the good work which you began.

Enter Margaretta.

MARGARETTA.

What are your ladyship's commands with me?

VICTORIA.

There is a vessel wreck'd upon our coast,
From which, of all the crew, one hapless man
By Ferdinand's exertion has been sav'd.

You must provide wherewith to succour him,
For he is destitute of all—

Enter Guzman.

GUZMAN.

Here I am,

Ever obedient to your ladyship's orders.

What may your ladyship be pleas'd to want?

I'll wager now some base has just occurr'd

Which calls for my assistance.

VICTORIA.

You guess rightly.

GUZMAN.

Has your good ladyship been indispos'd?

There is a flushing in your cheek to your pulse—

With your good leave—*[Attempts to feel her pulse.]*

VICTORIA.

No, Guzman, you are wrong.

GUZMAN.

That's wonderful!—Oh! then, 'tis the young lady.

(He feels Clara's pulse.)

Hey! let me see—Why what's the matter here?

On a full gallop!—One, two, three, four, five—

CLARA.

Let go my arm, I say; I'm well enough,

And do not need your doct'ring.

GUZMAN.

Nay, young lady,

I know what ails you better than yourself.

If Guzman now must learn his trade of you,

'Twould be a pretty world. Not ill indeed !

VICTORIA.

You are again mistaken.

GUZMAN.

How ? Oh ho !

'Tis the young gentleman then, after all !

VICTORIA.

His rashness might have thrown him past your help—

GUZMAN.

Aye, that same rashness is the common fault
Of youth. How often have I said, “ young man,
“ Take my advice ; one’s never in such danger,
“ As when one feels the strongest.” Galen says,
And he says well—

VICTORIA.

Some other time we’ll hear him.

You’re wrong again. He needs not your prescriptions.

GUZMAN.

He not ill neither ? That is mighty strange !
If you’re all well, why do you summon me ?

VICTORIA.

Be silent, and I’ll tell you. The late storm

Has wreck'd a vessel on our coast. Of all
On board none 'scap'd—

GUZMAN.

That seems a desp'rate case,
In which my skill can be of little service.

VICTORIA.

If you would talk a little less yourself,
And give more heed to me—

GUZMAN.

I'm all attention.

But surely your good ladyship can't think
That, when a patient once is fairly drown'd—

VICTORIA.

Will you be silent, sir, and hear me out?

GUZMAN.

Close as a well cork'd phial.

VICTORIA.

Of the crew

None 'scap'd, save one, whom Ferdinand preserv'd,
And to Teresa's neighb'ring cot convey'd.
Go there, and do your utmost to restore him.

GUZMAN.

Aye, that's another case. If he be living,
The greater danger he is in the better.
Let but a spark of life remain, we'll see

If death or Guzman shall be conqueror !

[*Exit Guzman.*]

VICTORIA.

Now, Margarett, we must try to find
What may relieve this hapless stranger's wants.

MARGARETTA.

Of linen and apparel there's enough.
Is there aught else you'd wish me to provide ?

VICTORIA.

(*To Ferdinand*)—What seem'd the stranger's quality ?

FERDINAND.

His garments

Accorded ill with what his mien bespoke :
For, though his cheeks were colourless, his eyes
Half clos'd, and from his floating hair
The briny flood yet dript, methought a ray
Of innate nobleness beam'd forth, which shew'd
He once had known a more propitious fortune ;
Like a rich jewel, which, though meanly lodg'd
In a poor casket, still retains it's lustre.
There was a something indescribable,
Which shot across my breast as I look'd on him,
Of mingled pity and respect. Indeed,
His suff'rings to the former gave him claim,
But why I yielded him respect I know not.
Yet so it was.

VICTORIA.

We often see, that nature
Stamps on the outward lineaments the mark
Of the rare qualities which grace the heart.
I too feel interested for the stranger,
Whose mere appearance could impress you thus.
Did he impart his name and his condition?

FERDINAND.

He did not; nor did I importune him
With questions, ill adapted to the state
In which the perils he had pass'd had left him.

CLARA.

Had I been there, I had been less discreet:
There surely is some mystery about him.

FERDINAND.

So I should guess; for, whether it were owing
To the confusion caus'd by his late danger,
Or to some recollections which oppress'd
His lab'ring heart, I know not, but his speech
Appear'd to wander strangely.

VICTORIA.

Did you note
What 'twas he said?

FERDINAND.

One passage seem'd so strange,
I could not but remark it forcibly.

When he recover'd sense enough to know
 That to my timely aid he ow'd his life,
 He rais'd his languid eyes, and for awhile
 Gaz'd on me, while his countenance betray'd
 A strange and quick succession of emotions :
 Then, cov'ring his pale face with both his hands,
 He deeply sigh'd, and with a feeble voice
 Exclaim'd—" Is it a phantom that I see,
 " Cloath'd in the living semblance of that being"—

VICTORIA.

The living semblance of that being, said he ?
 Good heav'n !

CLARA.

What ails you, madam ? You are ill.
 Send some one straightway to bring Guzman back.

VICTORIA.

No, no—remain—'twas nothing (*to Margaretta*)—Did
 you mark
 The stranger's words—" cloath'd in the living semblance "
 There is but—

MARGARETTA,

Hush ! I pray you be compos'd.
 There may be nothing in it.

VICTORIA (*to Ferdinand*).

Pray go on.

Said he aught else ?

FERDINAND.

A sudden burst of tears
Prevented farther speech. He made a sign,
Imploring us to leave him. Though I wish'd
To learn more circumstances of his story,
I felt too strong a rev'rence for his grief
Unduly on his privacy to trespass.

VICTORIA.

You acted well.—He may indeed have cause—
Oh Margaretta !

MARGARETTA.

Why are you thus mov'd ?

VICTORIA.

Those strange mysterious words—

MARGARETTA.

No more, I pray.

Did

Let me conduct you to your own apartment.

VICTORIA.

e "

Do so.—(To Clara and Ferdinand) I would not have
you be alarm'd—

I'm sometimes thus—I shall recover soon.

CLARA.

Nay truly you're unwell; your colour changes.
Let me assist you.—So—Go, Margaretta,
See that the chamber be prepar'd.—Now, madam—

[Exit Margaretta.]

Come, Ferdinand, and help me to support her.
That's well—now, if you please.

VICTORIA.

Thanks, my kind love!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

A High Road near De Silva Castle.

Enter Don Lopez de Gongora and Gomez with a Cloakbag.

LOPEZ.

Plague on those sandy hills, those barren remnants
Of primitive confusion, which reflect
From their loose surface heat enough to melt
A man of less consistence than myself!
And double plagues light on the restive mule,
On which this worn I mounted for my sins!
I would have turn'd her from the narrow path,
Which on the verge of a steep precipice
She had chos'n out; but she, forsooth, preferring
Her wit to mine, demurr'd. I rais'd my staff,
And smote her o'er the ears; she rais'd her heels,
And toss'd me some three yards before her head.
The dogs may feast on her for what I care,
And on me too, if e'er again I mount her.
How far is't, varlet, to De Silva Castle?

GOMEZ.

'Tis somewhat better, sir, than half a mile.
It may be more or less for aught I know.
I'll not be positive.

LOPEZ.

You will be positive,
Nay most superlative, in formal dulness.
Better than half a mile!

GOMEZ.

Aye, I'll be sworn
'Tis that at least. Why, it's a furlong hence—
So said the muleteer—let's see—a furlong.
To Pedro's cottage—twice as much to Sancho's—

LOPEZ.

'Tis a day's journey! I shall melt away,
Like a wax image 'fore a witch's fire.
Where is my cloak-bag, mongrel? I shall need
A change of garments, when my journey's ended.

GOMEZ.

Here 'tis, an't please your worship.

LOPEZ.

Take it up—
Why how unhandily you set about it!

GOMEZ.

'Tis passing weighty, sir, for one like me.
I can't—

LOPEZ.

What, mutiny?—Here—take it up.

GOMEZ.

I may as well attempt to move you cliff
As raise it up. I pray you lend a hand.

LOPEZ.

Marry, that I will straight. *(Strikes Gomez.)*

GOMEZ.

Nay, an you strike me,
Your fardel may lie here till doomsday, or
You may e'en carry it yourself. I list not.

LOPEZ.

What's that thou say'st?

GOMEZ.

I won't.

LOPEZ.

Thoud'st best take heed.

GOMEZ.

Look you, Don Lopez, or Don Gongora,
I know not if I give you your right titles,
But this I know, I'll be your slave no longer.
Here goes your liv'ry! Some two dozen valets
Have worn't already, and it may fit others.
Pay me my wages! I have serv'd ten weeks
At th' rate of twenty crowns per annum—

LOPEZ.

Phew!

Is the man mad? What ails thee, my good Gomez?
Some gad-fly sure hath stung thee. Leave me, say'st thou?
Thou know'st thy duty better, than to quit me
Here in this desert, all alone and helpless.
Tut! Thou'rt a simpleton. I did but joke.
'Tis a droll way I have.

GOMEZ.

Yes, mighty droll

T'abuse and strike one.

LOPEZ.

'Twas a joke, I tell thee.

Here, take it up, I pray. I'll lend a hand.

GOMEZ.

If 'twere no more than joke—

LOPEZ.

It was no more.

GOMEZ.

Well, I'm an easy fool.—So — (*puts on his cloaths*)

Raise it now.

Give me my staff.

LOPEZ.

Now onward to the castle.

(*Aside*) When we get there, I'll teach thee a new lesson.

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Donna Victoria's Chamber.

Donna Victoria and Margarettla discovered.

VICTORIA.

LEAVE me, my Mar'gret, I'm unfit for converse;
Leave me to brood o'er the distressing thoughts
Which rack my bosom.

MARGARETTA.

Dearest lady! do not
Give way to useless grief.

VICTORIA.

Term it not so.
You heard what this mysterious stranger said,
Whose likeness could he find in the dear youth
On whom he gaz'd, but mine?

MARGARETTA.

Nay, that is sure.
From the first moment when I swaddled him,
And bore him privately from Lagos Castle

For fear his infant cries should reach your father,
 I noted his resemblance to yourself.
 He had your brow, the dimple on your cheek,
 And, when he rais'd his eyes and smil'd upon me,
 I could have sworn it was yourself in little.
 But how can this poor stranger—

VICTORIA.

Who but one,
 Upon whose mind the features of the mother
 Had an indelible impression made,
 Could in her offspring such resemblance find?
 Oh lost Montalban! from my constant heart
 Nor time nor absence can thine image blot!

MARGARETTA.

I grieve you thus should speak. Can you forget
 How ill Montalban has deserv'd your love?

VICTORIA.

Alas! too well I know it; yet, in spite
 Of all his falsehoods, still my heart is faithful:
 By day I think of him, and, when at night
 Sleep seals my eyes, I see him in my dreams,
 As he was then, when first my yielding heart
 Confess'd his pow'r, and own'd him as its lord.

MARGARETTA.

Nay, ma'am, that letter from his correspondent
 The great Peruvian merchant, which Don Lopez

De Gongora, his factor here, once shew'd you,
 Containing the detail of his new nuptials,
 Is evidence enough of his deceit.
 If farther still were wanting, you have that,
 Which afterwards he wrote himself, denying
 To Lopez that you was his wife, and daring,
 Aye, daring you to th' proof of it.

VICTORIA.

Too well

He knew I could bring none. Our only witness,
 The holy priest who join'd our hands, was dead,
 Ere to Peru his haughty father sent him
 To break those ties his pride disdain'd to sanction.
 Cruel Montalban! was it not enough
 To make me wretched? What had our child done,
 Thus to be made an outcast, thus to lose
 At once his name, inheritance and station?
 The very thought is madness!

MARGARETTA.

In good truth

I hardly could believe it.—But those letters—
 There's no resisting them—and yet it may be—
 Are you quite certain, madam, of Don Lopez?

VICTORIA.

Why ask you that?

MARGARETTA.

I know not ; but there's something
In his appearance, and his manners too,
May lead one to suspect he may have motives—

VICTORIA.

You know how much Montalban trusted him,
And, since he left his native land, maintain'd
Close correspondence with him.

MARGARETTA.

True, yet still
Doubts will arise—

VICTORIA.

What int'rest can he have
Thus to calumniate one, who, as he owns,
Has ever prov'd himself his firmest friend ?
Let's think no more of him, but of some means
To clear away the gloom which thus involves me.
Perhaps this stranger—

MARGARETTA.

What do you hope from him ?

VICTORIA.

Nothing—or ev'ry thing !—Could I but see him—
What if we visit him ?

MARGARETTA.

Nay, I beseech you—
As yet, the myst'ry which attends your marriage

Is known to Lopez and myself alone.
Should you improvidently drop a hint
Which may create suspicion— Be advis'd.

VICTORIA.

Your caution's just. Perhaps the trial might
Prove more than I can bear. Do you, my friend,
Go and converse with him. You know the whole
Of my sad story.

MARGARETTA.

Marry, that I do.

VICTORIA.

Go then, and try to ascertain the truth,
Whatever the result may be, 'twill sooth
My heart to know it.

MARGARETTA.

Trust to me. I warrant
I'll bring you full intelligence.

VICTORIA.

Come then.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Inside of Teresa's Collage.

*Montalban discovered, reclining on a miserable Pallet,
Guzman and Teresa standing by him.*

MONTALBAN.

I thank you, sir, and you my worthy hostess !

Methinks I'm much reviv'd, and would not tax
Your services beyond what need requires.

TERESA.

You may feel better, but you yet are weak.
While we can be of use to you, I'm sure
Our time is heartily at your disposal.

GUZMAN.

Our time indeed! Pray answer for yourself,
Good woman! Mine, I'd have you know, is precious.

MONTALBAN.

Then stay not here, I pray. A shipwreck'd man,
Like me, can't recompense your services.

GUZMAN.

That's like enough.—Well, I may call again,
Or I may not, as my occasion suits.
Let's see—you've had a med'cine, to recruit
Your wasted strength—you now require repose.
Here's a narcotic, which will make you sleep
Soundly, I'll answer for't.—Dame, see he take it.
I'll send you by and by a fresh prescription,
A nostrum of mine own—

MONTALBAN.

I shall not need it.

GUZMAN.

How's that? Not need it? Mighty fine indeed!
Pray who's the better judge, sir, you or I?

MONTALBAN.

Nay, sir, I do not question your endowments.
You may be very learned.

GUZMAN.

Wiser heads
Than yours have found me so; and yet, forsooth,
You take upon you to dispute with me!

MONTALBAN.

There's no offence, I hope.

GUZMAN.

Yes, but there is.
When such a man as I demeans himself
T'attend on one like you—

MONTALBAN (*rising*).

He should remember
That breeding and humanity become him.

GUZMAN.

What's that you say, sir?—Here's a pretty business!
One, whom from charity I condescend
To visit and relieve, to dictate to me!
One who has not a ryal in his pocket,
The poor fee-simple of whose whole possessions
Would fail to pay the prime cost o'th' drugs
He has already swallow'd—

MONTALBAN.

Look you, sir,

For that assistance you've afforded me
 I pay you with the only coin I have,
 My thanks ; but for your most uncourteous railing,
 The sole return it merits is contempt.
 Take it, and go your way.

GUZMAN.

Mighty fine, truly !

A pretty treatment this for Signor Guzman,
 A doctor graduate of Salamanca,
 And body surgeon to my lady here !
 But I am rightly serv'd—this 'tis to wait
 On vagrants—

MONTALBAN.

How !

TERESA.

You'd better go, good Guzman.

GUZMAN.

You are a fool !—Insult me at this rate !
 I'd have you know—

MONTALBAN.

I would not counsel you,
 For your own sake, to try my patience farther.
 I may be poor, sir, but I am a man.
 Once more, be gone !

GUZMAN.

Well, sir, since you're so gruff,

You've my free leave to cure or kill yourself—
 'Tis no concern of mine. So, sir, your servant.

[*Exit Guzman.*]

TERESA.

Ne'er heed him—thus he's always to the poor,
 Who must perforce submit and truckle to him,
 Or go without his med'cines when they're sick.
 They say he can bow low enough, and cringe,
 When he's in company with those above him;
 But, by the mass! he's proud enough with us.

MONTALBAN.

I've long been us'd to suff'ring, my good dame,
 And only wonder, that my mind has strength
 Enough remaining to resent his rudeness.
 I find I yet have much to learn, before
 My feelings can be properly subdued.

TERESA.

Aye, it's a sorry world for such as we.

MONTALBAN.

No, no, good dame, the world is not in fault,
 Nor the great pow'r that rules it. 'Tis a stage,
 Where all have parts; it matters not which falls
 To any of us, for our scene is brief,
 And, if we act it well, our recompense
 May be expected in a better place.

TERESA.

I think so sometimes, when I'm cold and hungry,
And the reflection gladdens me.—Who's there?

[*A knocking at the door.*]Come in, I pray: [*Montalban sits musing on the pallet.*]*Enter Margaretta.*

Oh madam!

MARGARETTA.

Hist! Come here.

(*Aside*)—I bring some things for the poor shipwreck'd
stranger,

And would converse with him; but, do you mark me,
I wish him not to know me.

TERESA.

Aye, you are

A charitable lady!

MARGARETTA.

Leave us, pray. [*Exit Teresa.*]

Save you, good sir—Nay, stir not, I beseech you;
Your weakness needs repose. Here is a seat,
On which I will sit by you.—(*Sits*)—I have heard
Of your misfortune, and have brought some trifles,
Which may perhaps supply your present wants.

MONTALBAN.

I will not wrong you, madam, by extolling
Your gen'rous condescension to a stranger.

You will have better praise than I can give you.

MARGARETTA.

Your suff'rings have been great, and you may need
More succour than Teresa can afford you.

MONTALBAN.

My corp'ral suff'rings scarce require a thought.
(*Rising*)—Some slight contusions, and a little weakness,
Are all I can complain of.

MARGARETTA.

Pardon me;
I should suspect there are some other evils,
If I may guess from your appearance, which
By many would be counted burthensome.

MONTALBAN.

What, poverty! the lack of rich attire?
Call not those evils—they're of small account.
Villains may boast their wealth, bear on their backs
The spoils of provinces, and deck their tables
With feasts that might supply an hospital,
While honesty, in such a garb as mine,
Houseless, expos'd to all the winds of heav'n,
Would scorn their fellowship.

MARGARETTA.

You speak as if
You had experience of the world's injustice.

MONTALBAN.

I've had experience of the world's reverses.
From the bright summit of prosperity
To be the wretch you now behold I fell :
I once had riches, now am I a beggar ;
I boasted rank, and am a nameless outcast ;
I had a friend—he cheated and undid me—

MARGARETTA.

Those were indeed hard trials ; yet consider,
Riches and dignities are fleeting things,
And falsehood in a friend, when known, grows harmless.

MONTALBAN.

I had sustain'd these patiently, if more
And worse had not remain'd. Appriz'd at length
Of the foul frauds of him I thought my friend,
With my remaining pittance I embark'd
For Barcelona. Scarce had I descried
The shores of Spain, when from Algiers a pirate
Bore me to harsh captivity.

MARGARETTA.

Take comfort ;
Your mis'ries now are o'er.

MONTALBAN.

I would they were.
A man like me, long season'd to misfortunes,
May bear with constancy all outward ills ;

But there are poisons, which assail the heart,
 And mock all antidote. Could you but know
 What passes here, you'd own I have strong cause
 For doubt and apprehension.

MARGARETTA.

May you not
 O'errate those apprehensions?

MONTALBAN.

No—Where'er
 I turn, my destiny seems almost hopeless.
 Oh madam! you're a woman, and can feel.
 Judge what must be my anguish, when I tell you
 I had a wife, dear to me as my soul—
 I pray forgive the weakness that unmans me.

MARGARETTA.

Alas for pity!—Is your wife living, sir?

MONTALBAN.

There, there you probe my mis'ry to the core.
 Oh! she was loveliness and truth itself;
 Her very soul seem'd mine; my bosom knew
 No other joy, no other hope but her;
 Yet was she torn from me!—As I hung o'er her,
 And press'd her to my agonizing breast,
 Scarce could her pale and quiv'ring lips pronounce
 Her last, last sad farewell!—Oh recollections
 Of happiness, for ever, ever lost,

Why rush ye like a torrent on my soul !
Why wring my heart with images of bliss,
Vanish'd, and never—But I crave your pardon—
Why should I trouble you with my distresses ?

MARGARETTA.

They are so weighty, that my heart can feel
An int'rest for them, as they were mine own.
They tempt me to enquire—excuse me pray—
What name you bear ?

MONTALBAN.

I wish not to conceal it.

Montalban is my name.

MARGARETTA.

Montalban !

MONTALBAN.

Yes—

A name once great and dignified, but now
Link'd to calamity.

MARGARETTA.

And what your wife's ?

MONTALBAN.

That is a secret, which my honour guards
More strictly than my life. I swore to keep it,
'Till more propitious fortune should allow me
In the world's face to claim her.—But enough—
I know not how it is—your kindness led me

To call to my remembrance sad events
Which, as my strength as yet is unconfirm'd,
Have somewhat shaken me. With your good leave,
I would go forth, and taste a freer air.

MARGARETTA.

Teresa !

Enter Teresa.

Here—take up this seat, and place it
Before your door. A little change of scene
And the fresh breezes may recruit your guest.
Be of good courage, sir ; things yet may mend.
Nay, do not look so sad. If you deserve
A better fortune, it may yet await you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

An Apartment in De Silva Castle.

Enter Donna Victoria.

VICTORIA.

An hour and more are past, since Margaret
Left me to visit this mysterious stranger ;
And still she comes not. Why thus palpitates
My woe-worn heart ? Is it because a ray
Of hope breaks forth, to dissipate the gloom
Which long each flatt'ring prospect has obscur'd ?
Howe'er delusive it may prove, I'll court

It's cheering influence—

Enter Donna Clara.

CLARA.

Who d'you think's arriv'd?

I'm sure I should have just as soon expected
The Grand Inquisitor himself—

VICTORIA.

As whom?

CLARA.

He liv'd at such a monstrous distance from us—
He has such a name too—'tis Don something—

VICTORIA.

Prithee

Speak out at once, nor keep me in suspense.

CLARA.

Stay—Don—Don—now I have it—'tis Don Lopez,
Lopez de Gongora, from Barcelona.
Ar'n't you surpriz'd?

VICTORIA.

There's nothing sure surprising,
That one I've known so long should visit me.
I thought at first 'it might have been another.

CLARA.

I wish it had been; for I ne'er saw one
Whom I felt less dispos'd to like than him.
I met him in the entrance, and before

I could effect my escape, he rudely stopt me,
 And stunn'd me with a flood of fulsome nonsense
 About my brilliant eyes and my complection,
 Gloating and staring on me with a look
 So forward that I shudder'd. Still he held me,
 'Till Ferdinand came up to my relief,
 And made him quit me.—As I live, he comes.

Enter Don Lopez and Ferdinand.

LOPEZ (*to Ferdinand*).

You'll give me leave to tell you, young-Signor,
 You have no right to meddle—(*seeing Victoria*) Ah my
 queen!
 Queen of De Silva! see your faithful servant
 From Barcelona comes to pay his court.

VICTORIA.

You're welcome, sir.

LOPEZ.

I'faith! I should be so,
 For I've sustain'd more perilous adventures
 Than any of your heroes in romance,
 O'er hill and dale, by water and by land—
 (*Seeing Clara*) Ah my sweet little rose-bud! have I
 caught you?

CLARA.

Pray, sir, keep off—

VICTORIA.

Nay, Clara, don't be shy—

LOPEZ.

There, do you hear? Come, we shall be good friends.
So, now, your hand—

CLARA.

Protect me, Ferdinand!

LOPEZ.

Oh ho! Is that the case?—(to Ferdinand)—Stand
aside, boy!

A little more respect would best become you.

FERDINAND.

'Twould more become you, sir, to leave her quiet,
Nor thus forget the rev'rence of your age.

LOPEZ.

Why thus it ever is. These smooth-fac'd boys,
Who think they're men because they're whipt no longer,
Conclude that lusty manhood must be old.

FERDINAND.

If you dispute it, sir, I apprehend
Your mirror or your feelings may convince you
You bear about you symptoms strong of age.

LOPEZ.

I tell thee I am young, and stout to boot.
Symptoms of age indeed! A puling child
Like thee to tutor me! Od'slife, young sir,

If thou once anger me—

FERDINAND.

Stop, sir, in time ;
I may be else provok'd. This lady's presence
Prevents me from replying.—Come, my Clara,
Let us retire—

LOPEZ.

Nay, an you quit me thus—

[Exeunt Clara and Ferdinand.]

VICTORIA.

Now, sir, perhaps, you will vouchsafe to tell me
What urgent bus'ness makes you visit me.

LOPEZ.

What urgent business, say you? You shall know,
I'faith, madonna! I am glad to see you
With such a countenance, so fresh and blooming.
By good St. Anthony, you look not older,
Than when that runnagate, beshrew him for it!
That wild Montalban play'd you such a trick.

VICTORIA.

That is a subject, sir, I would avoid.

LOPEZ.

Nay, 'twas a foul one. What could he discover
In that far southern world to equal you?
Yet, strange as 'tis, I find he still doats on her,
And on her swarthy brood.

VICTORIA.

Have you then heard
Aught new respecting him?

LOPEZ.

Aye, marry, have I;
But nothing likely to afford you pleasure.

VICTORIA.

That may be, sir; but I should wish to hear it.

LOPEZ.

An you will know—A vessel from Peru,
Which touch'd at Barcelona lately, brought me
A letter from himself. Unless your heart
Hath ceas'd to feel for him as it was wont,
You'd best not ask its purport.

VICTORIA.

Speak it boldly:

I am prepar'd for all.

LOPEZ.

Thus then it is.

After detailing all his present comforts,
He talk'd about his wife, sung forth her praises
With all the ardour of a doating husband,
And prattled of his children—he has six of 'em—
As if I felt an int'rest in the brats.
But this was a mere trifle to what follow'd.

VICTORIA.

What can be worse?

LOPEZ.

Nay, so I thought you'd say.

But you will know it—Thus then he went on.

I owe, says he, a duty to my children,

And wish to bring them and my wife to Spain;

But, while she lives who has a tie upon me—

Meaning yourself no doubt—you know I cannot

Adventure to produce them: tell me therefore,

Adds he with earnestness, if fav'ring fortune

Hath disencumber'd me from that dead weight.

VICTORIA.

That soon will be! I wanted only this

To break my suff'ring heart. To be despis'd!

Treated as a mere drawback on his pleasures!

LOPEZ.

From what he adds of his wife's wish to come,

I should not marvel, if her strong intreaties

O'ercame his scruples, and prevail'd on him

To hasten home—

VICTORIA (*aside*).

It is, it must be so!

That vessel bore them!—They are lost!—Oh heav'n!

[*She throws herself on a sofa, weeping.*]

LOPEZ (*aside*).

So, so, it works—the bait went glibly down.
Go to—all favours me. Montalban's safe
In the strong clutches of his Moorish master,
And ne'er will come to claim from me his wealth,
Or give the lie to my ingenious fictions.
I sail before the wind. Now's the fit time
To broach the purpose of my visit here.

VICTORIA (*starting up*).

Who waits?

Enter Page.

Send Roderigo hither. [*Exit Page.*

LOPEZ.

Nay,

Now we are private you had better hear me.
What I've to say is pleasanter than that
On which we have convers'd.

VICTORIA.

Excuse me now

I pray. Whatever be your cause of coming,
Think yourself welcome—

Enter Roderigo.

Mark me, Roderigo,

Wait on this gentleman, provide him all

He may require or wish.—(*To Lopez*)—Use your good
pleasure

While here you sojourn, and take some repose
After your journey. - [*Exit Victoria.*]

LOPEZ.

Take repose, quotha !

I will take that, and some refreshment too.
(*To Roderigo*) What station hold you in your lady's service ?

RODERIGO.

That which may haply best your purpose suit.
Her steward.

LOPEZ.

What ! thou bear'st the household keys,
Presidest o'er the butt'ry and the kitchen,
Sole governor of all the ample butts
Of gen'rous sherry and rich malvoisie ?
Give me thine hand. I reverence thy functions.

RODERIGO.

Would'st take a nap first, to refresh thyself,
Or have a slight repast, to stay thy stomach
'Till dinner comes ?

LOPEZ.

Let dogs sleep, an they will :
I'm hungry, monstrous hungry.

RODERIGO.

They shall bring thee
Some delicate conserves.

LOPEZ.

A steward thou !

Think'st thou this bulk is nourish'd on conserves?
I tell thee—What's thy name?

RODERIGO.

'Tis Roderigo.

LOPEZ.

Then, master Roderigo, you mistake me.
Such puny cates suit not my constitution.
An thou would'st prove my friend indeed, conduct me
To thine own regions, to the land of plenty,
The fragrant kitchen, and the well stor'd cellar.

RODERIGO.

Take thine own pleasure. We have store enough.

LOPEZ.

I'm glad to hear on't.—Lead the way, brave steward!

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in De Silva Castle.

Enter Donna Victoria and Margareta.

VICTORIA.

No more ! no more ! It is, it is Montalban,
Beyond all hope restor'd ! Mysterious heav'n,
How wond'rous, how inscrutable thy ways !
That he alone should 'scape the tempest's fury,
That his own child should save him from the deep !

MARGARETTA.

I joy to think your suff'rings now are past,
And that your future bliss—

VICTORIA.

My bliss ? Alas !

A flatt'ring vision for a moment dazzled
My slumb'ring senses—But 'tis past, and now
I wake again, with keener pangs to abide
The mis'ry that awaits me.

MARGARETTA.

Heav'n forbid !

Have I not told you that your own Montalban—

VICTORIA.

Mine own Montalban, say'st thou? So, alas!
I fondly once believ'd him—But he's false,
And I'm most wretched!—Oh my Margaretta!
I've had such fatal confirmation
Of my worst fears, that not a hope remains
To cheer my poor desponding heart. Don Lopez—

MARGARETTA.

What said he?

VICTORIA.

That Montalban had resolv'd,
With her who claims the title rightly mine,
To quit Peru, and hither to return.
And is he not arriv'd?

MARGARETTA.

What proof is that?

Wreck'd as he is—

VICTORIA.

Thence springs my strongest doubt.
Preserv'd alone from the destructive waves,
All evidences of his crime absorb'd
In the same gulph that swallow'd up his wealth,
May he not hope that with impunity
In a new character he may impose
On my credulity?

MARGARETTA.

It may be so.

Beyond all doubt there was a mystery
In what he said to me about his wife.
Nay, now I recollect, he spoke of her
As one for ever lost to him. What if
You were yourself to see him?

VICTORIA.

Not for worlds!

I cannot trust myself to such a trial.

MARGARETTA.

What other means remain to prove the truth?
Justice to him and to yourself requires,
You should not leave a matter undecided
On which the happiness of both depends.
See him—converse with him—

VICTORIA.

No more—a thought
Has just occur'd. Ask me no questions, Marg'ret,
But do as I direct. Let the best chamber
I' th' west wing of the castle be prepar'd—

MARGARETTA.

Why all this?

VICTORIA.

Ask me not.—Send Guzman hither—
Make haste.—I am not mad, my Margaret,

But desp'rate ills require a desp'rate cure.

[*Exit Margareta.*]

Now, if my project do but hold, I'll probe
His inmost soul, and ascertain the truth.

Enter Guzman.

GUZMAN.

Did your good ladyship enquire for me?
'Tis fortunate I just came back in time.

VICTORIA.

Where have you been?

GUZMAN.

Attentive to my duty;
Still mindful of your ladyship's commands.
He's doing very well.

VICTORIA.

Who?

GUZMAN.

Why the fellow,
Who 'scap'd so narrowly a drowning bout.
Another plunge had done his bus'ness for him.

VICTORIA.

You take strange liberties in your discourse.
Know you of whom you speak, sir?

GUZMAN.

Know him, madam?

Not I—I never saw his face before.

Do you, ma'am?

VICTORIA.

He's a stranger, and in want—

Sufficient titles, sir, for your respect.

GUZMAN.

I treated him respectfully enough ;
Though, to say truth, he gave himself more airs
Than well became him. Would you think it, ma'am ?
When I just hinted at the obligations
Conferr'd upon him—

VICTORIA.

How did you presume
To take a freedom so unwarranted ?
If e'er again you venture to exceed
My orders, sir—

GUZMAN.

I humbly crave your pardon,
I didn't know, that is, I thought no harm
In just insinuating—

VICTORIA.

You did ill.

Know you not 'tis our duty to relieve
Those in distress, but that we lose all merit,
When in return we look for other tribute
Than the warm feelings of a grateful heart ?

GUZMAN.

To be sure, ma'am.

VICTORIA.

Remember it in future.

GUZMAN.

Yes, ma'am.

VICTORIA.

How did you leave the gentleman?

GUZMAN (*aside*).

The gentleman!

VICTORIA.

Why don't you answer, sir?

GUZMAN.

Why, I was telling your good ladyship.

When he could swallow, I administer'd

A cordial draught. It had a fine effect.

Then, as I found he had some fev'rish symptoms,

I threw in a narcotic. 'Twas a stout one.

VICTORIA.

I hope you have not rashly giv'n him

Too strong a potion.

GUZMAN.

Not a grain too much.

Trust that to Guzman.—Ma'am, I undertake,

If your good ladyship were indispos'd,

To make up such a med'cine, 'twould amaze you.

Some thirty drops, ta'en in a glass of wine
Just as you go to bed, then wrap yourself
Up warmly—

VICTORIA.

Have you seen the stranger since?

GUZMAN.

This very moment left him—just return'd.
Ev'ry thing right as I foretold—no fever—
Pulse firm and regular—the patient dropt
Into a sleep, from which he'll not awake
For certain hours—

VICTORIA.

Ar't sure 'tis so profound?

GUZMAN.

Quite certain—you may beat a drum at's ease
Without disturbing him.

VICTORIA.

'Tis very well.

You may retire; but see you go not forth;
I shall have other business for you shortly.
Send Roderigo hither. *[Exit Guzman.]*

This will render
The project which I meditate more easy.

Enter Roderigo.

Hark, Roderigo!—I have form'd a plan,
In which you must assist me.

RODERIGO.

Well, good lady.

VICTORIA.

Did you much notice the poor shipwreck'd stranger?
D'you think there is much difference 'twixt his size
And that of Ferdinand?

RODERIGO.

Much difference?—No.

Their stature, as I guess, is nearly equal,
And as for bigness, why 'tis much the same.
There may be some small matter—but 'tis trifling!

VICTORIA.

Go then to Ferdinand's apartment quickly,
And unobserv'd bring hither the new habit
I order'd for th' arrival of the viceroy.

RODERIGO.

What will Don Ferdinand, though, say to this?

VICTORIA.

That's my concern. Bring it away directly,
And take it to the stranger.

RODERIGO.

To the stranger!

VICTORIA.

Aye, sir; but enter not, 'till from Teresa
You learn he's bound in a deep settled sleep.
Then cloath him in the garments you take with you,

And to the castle's western wing convey him,
 (Still careful not to interrupt his slumbers)
 Where Margaretta will direct you farther.
 Do this discreetly, and my favour shall
 Reward your zeal. [Exit Victoria.

RODERIGO.

Oh ho! is't there you are?
 Discreetly, say you? 'Tis a goodly phrase,
 And suited to the circumstance. Well, well—
 Just as you please—'tis no concern of mine.
 Why, we sha'n't know De Silva Castle soon.
 I'faith! we're like to have a rare assemblage.
 There's one already hard at work below,
 Don Gongora—I left him in the cellar,
 Bestriding a full cask of Malmsey sack,
 Like a true drunkard. If this other's like him,
 All Spain cannot produce a third to match 'em.

[Exit.

SCENE II.

Another Apartment in De Silva Castle.

Enter Clara followed by Ferdinand.

CLARA.

I tell you, you're as tiresome as Don Lopez.
 You know I can't endure you when you're serious.

FERDINAND.

No, no; I've fairly caught you. You shall hear me.

CLARA.

Well, what have you to say with that grave look?

FERDINAND.

Though it may ill become me to exalt
My hopes beyond their level, yet when thus
I daily witness charms—

CLARA.

Pray stop a minute.

If you begin heroics, I must take
A decent state, and put on all the airs
Of a vain heroine in an old romance.
But I am ill at feigning; so leave off
Romantic flights, and talk like other people.
Why don't you speak?

FERDINAND.

Can nothing make you serious?

CLARA.

Why really, while you look so dismally,
I cannot help—But come—I ask your pardon—
I am quite serious. Now I hope I please you.
Come—what have you to say?—I'm all impatience.
Nay, now you're quite provoking. Won't you speak?

FERDINAND.

In one word then—I love you!

CLARA.

Do you so?

I'm glad to hear on't, for I love you too.

FERDINAND.

Transporting sound! Oh say it once again!

CLARA.

What need is there of that? You know I do.

I've told you so a hundred times already.

I could not love you more, were you my brother.

FERDINAND.

Only as if I were your brother, say you?

CLARA.

Why is not that enough? I never had one,

And ne'er can wish for one while I have you.

FERDINAND.

Has your heart never whisper'd you, my Clara,

There is a sentiment more warm and vivid

Than what a sister for a brother feels?

Mine has instructed me.

CLARA.

What is't you mean?

I understand you not. From the first dawn

Of reason, when we toy'd and play'd together,

I'm sure I lov'd you better than myself.

What more can I do now?

FERDINAND.

Ah! did you feel
 Like me, you would not ask. When absent from you,
 I think each hour a day, each day a year;
 I gaze with apathy on nature's charms,
 And all the beauties of reviving spring;
 The groves no more are vocal, the fresh breeze
 From the gay flow'ret brings to me no odours—

CLARA.

But when you're with me?

FERDINAND.

Then all nature smiles,
 My heart expands to transport, hours and days
 Fly swift as moments, spring assumes new lustre—

CLARA.

Ah Ferdinand! If this indeed be love,
 I've felt the same, or surely something like it.
 Without you all is sad: I sit and muse,
 But always on my Ferdinand; I sigh,
 And, when I ask my heart what caus'd its grief,
 It whispers me my Ferdinand is absent.
 When I am with you—But you'll think me foolish—

FERDINAND.

Sweet innocence! thus on thy hand I swear
 Eternal truth!—But hold—this may not be—
 What am I doing? How has passion led

Rashly to nourish hopes beyond my reach,
And aim at such perfection?

CLARA.

Say not so.

In what respect am I superior to you?
You've been, you know it well, my best instructor;
From Marg'ret's lessons oft I've flown to you,
And listen'd with delight when you discours'd
Of truths, which, when she spoke them, had no charms,
But which, prefer'd by you, like heav'nly music
With magic influence stole upon my heart.
No, no, my Ferdinand, you wrong yourself,
And are unjust to me.

FERDINAND.

No, my lov'd Clara,
I know and do full justice to your worth.
Had I been plac'd by fortune in a station
More corresponding with th' ambitious hope
That warms my bosom, I might have aspir'd
At excellence, which now—Forgive me, Clara—
Pity me—think on what I owe to her
Whose gen'rous bounty made me what I am.

CLARA.

Can you then doubt of her exalted goodness?
Have you not always been her fondest care?

FERDINAND.

And shall I thus repay it?

CLARA.

Did she think

Your happiness at stake—

FERDINAND.

Ah! lead me not

Through flow'ry paths to a steep precipice,

Lest my brain turn, and all my constancy

Fade like a mist before the rising sun.

Oh! you have rais'd a phantom, which might draw me

Into a maze of errors—Look not thus,

So tenderly—

Enter Don Lopez.

LOPEZ.

Heyday! What's here to do?

My little rose-bud smuggled into corners?

Od's me! if that's the case I'll have my share.

(Advances towards Clara.

(To Ferdinand) What! you'd monopolize her, would you, boy?

FERDINAND.

I would protect her against such as thou.

LOPEZ.

'Gainst such as me? Why, thou most puny milksop!

Ten urchins like thyself would not suffice

To make a man like me.—Stand off, I say—

CLARA.

Faugh! how he smells of wine!

LOPEZ.

I warrant me—

That Roderigo is an honest fellow,
And gave me of the best. In mellow sack
I drank thy health. The liquor was divine;
It cheer'd my heart, and through my veins transfus'd
Rich lusty blood— [*He attempts to seize Clara.*]

FERDINAND.

You come no nearer, sir—

(*To Clara*) You'd better leave us—

CLARA.

Promise then you will not

Let him provoke you—

FERDINAND.

Fear not, but retire.

(*Exit Clara.*)

LOPEZ.

Nay, an you 'scape me thus—What gone?—Od's life!
Boy, give me way—

FERDINAND.

You pass no farther, sir.

LOPEZ.

Oh ho! sir champion! must you be chastiz'd?

(*Draws his sword.*)

I'll teach you better manners—(*Pushing*)—There—and there—

FERDINAND.

If you will force me to it—

(*They fight—Ferdinand disarms Lopez.*)

LOPEZ.

Where's my sword?

Give it me back again.

Enter Donna Victoria.

VICTORIA.

What means all this?

Swords drawn?—Say, Ferdinand, whence rose this brawl?

FERDINAND.

To rescue Clara from his ribbald manners—

I need not tell you more. You see his state.

LOPEZ.

Heed him not, good madonna. Send him off.

I've something of importance to impart.

VICTORIA.

You'd better take some other time.

LOPEZ.

Why so?

The present time's the best. I am not drunk—

A little rais'd or so.—Send him away.

VICTORIA. (*to Ferdinand*).

Let some of my domestics wait without,

And leave us.

FERDINAND.

I obey you. *[Exit Ferdinand.]*

LOPEZ.

That is well.

'Tis a most malapert and forward boy,
Spoilt by indulgence.

VICTORIA.

Sir, you know him not.

LOPEZ.

No? Then I'll tell thee wherefore I am come.
Let me sit down, madonna, for my head
Seems somehow as it were—Now mark you me—

(He sits on the sofa.)

I'm passing rich, you know. In lands and houses,
Good mortgages, and fat securities,
I'm master of ten thousand crowns a year.
All this, perhaps you'll think, might satisfy
A reasonable man; yet, so it is,
I am not satisfied.

VICTORIA.

That's surely strange.

LOPEZ.

Not strange at all; for, when I see my wealth
Daily increasing, when in my strong box
My dollars are prolific, and my ducats

And weighty moidores generate their like,
 I oftentimes bethink me that myself
 Should follow their example. Hey, madonna!
 Were it not pity that the Gongoras
 Should in my person be extinct? So, mark you,
 I have been looking out for a fit bride.

VICTORIA.

I wish you good success, sir.

LOPEZ.

One, whose youth
 And comeliness bespeak fertility,
 Who'd bring me little Gongoras in plenty,
 To cheer and cherish me when I grow old.
 And whom—I know you will be pleas'd to hear on't—
 Whom do you think I've honour'd with my choice?—
 Nay, as you cannot guess—'Tis your niece Clara.

VICTORIA.

Surely you cannot seriously propose—

LOPEZ.

Softly, madonna! She is fair and young,
 I'm very rich, and young enough in conscience.

VICTORIA (*rising*).

Let's hear no more on't—

LOPEZ (*rising with difficulty*).

No? Why not, I pray?
 Ten thousand crowns a year! I'll prove it to you!

VICTORIA.

There's no occasion.

LOPEZ.

Marry but there is.

Who waits there, ho!

Enter Page.

Go to my chamber, sirrah!

You'll find a cedar casket. Bring it hither.

(Exit Page.)

Doubt my veracity? I'll prove to you

What my pretensions are to woo your niece—

I'll shew you such a catalogue of wealth—

Plague on this potent sack! It 'gins to mount—

And whiz within my brain—

(He staggers to the sofa, and throws himself on it.)

Why stays the knave!

Enter Page.

Aye—that's the casket—give it me—hence!

[Exit Page.]

Which is the key?—Confound this awkward lock!—

I've open'd it at last—now let me see—

*[He turns over the papers.]**Enter Margaretta.*

MARGARETTA (to Victoria).

All is prepar'd—

LOPEZ.

That's not it—no, nor this—

Let's see the next—Umph! umph! what ails mine eyes?

The letters dance before 'em, up and down,

This way and that—I'm surely very drunk!

[He drops asleep, and lets the box and papers fall.]

MARGARETTA.

Look, madam, if he be not fall'n asleep,

And half his papers on the ground.—What's this?

[She picks them up.]

“My cash account”—and this—“State of the monies

“Sent over by Montalban from Peru.”

If I were you, I'd look them over, madam.

VICTORIA.

Just now my mind is too much occupied;

Meantime replace them safely in the casket,

And lodge it in my chamber. Send some hither

To bear away this drunken profligate.

*[Exeunt severally.]**— Enter Roderigo and Servants.*

RODERIGO.

How's this? Asleep, my hero of the cellar?

Knock'd up already? Thou'rt a special fellow!

SERVANT *(shaking him)*.

He has't, i'faith!

RODERIGO.

Aye, he has got his dose;
 That cask of malmsey did his bus'ness for him.
 But come, my lads, we must not leave him here.

SERVANT.

He is so fat and heavy, we can't stir him.

~~RODERIGO.~~

Then take him couch and all. No matter where
 You trundle him. 'Tis all the same to him.

[*Exeunt with Lopez.*]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

A magnificent Saloon.

*Montalban discovered, superbly drest, lying on a couch,
Guzman, Margareta, and Attendants, standing by him.*

MARGARETTA.

So, all is ready now.—How long d'you think
'Twill be ere he awaken?

GUZMAN.

'Twill be soon.

Conformably with all the rules laid down
By the most learned writers on narcotics,
When the complexion freshens, as his does,
The patient soon revives.—Nay see, he moves.

MARGARETTA.

Each to his post! It is my lady's will
That none be present when he first regains
His recollection.—Now let music sound.

[*Exeunt Margareta, Guzman, and Attendants. Soft
music from above the stage.*]

MONTALBAN.

Heigh-ho! What time o'th'day is't, good Teresa?—
What heav'nly sounds were those?—(*He starts up.*)—Ha!

What means this?

Where am I?—Surely 'tis enchantment all!
These rich habiliments—my humble cot
Chang'd to a sumptuous palace—Can this be
Reality?—No, no! 'Tis witchcraft all,
Or else some feverish dream, which taints my fancy
With vain and unsubstantial images.
It must be so. I'll lay me down again,
And sleep myself once more into my senses.

[*He lies down. Voice from above sings.*

Life is short, and so are pleasures;
Use them wisely as they flow:
Take thy share of fortune's treasures,
But ask not more than thou may'st know.

MONTALBAN (*starting up*).

This is prodigious! Who thus answers me
As 'twere from th'clouds?—Was this delusion too?
I do begin to think I am awake,
And all I see and hear realities.

[*A voice from above sings.*

Happy stranger, now prepare
To behold our sov'reign fair.

Turn thee, *stranger*, turn and see

Where she comes to welcome thee.

Enter Victoria, richly dressed and veiled.

MONTALBAN.

Who's that? The goddess of these fairy regions?

How graceful and how dignified her air!

She bows to me. I'll venture to address her.—

Forgive me, lady, if I dare to pay

That homage which thine excellence demands.

VICTORIA.

I ask no homage, *sir*: to a mere woman,

A weak one too, that term is misapplied.

MONTALBAN.

What less is due to *one*, who has the art

Of working miracles? Hate I my senses,

Or are they by some incantation charm'd,

To make me credit things, surpassing all

That poets are devis'd, or madmen dream'd?

VICTORIA.

There's no enchantment, *sir*, in what you see.

When you shall know me better, you'll confess

I am not one likely to deal in spells.

MONTALBAN.

Then it is true that I indeed was wreck'd,

Laid in an humble cottage—

VICTORIA.

'Tis most true.

MONTALBAN.

How then was I brought here ?

VICTORIA.

By my command.

MONTALBAN.

And why ?

VICTORIA.

I fear, were I to state my motive,
You might conceive, as yet you know me not,
I had outstept my sex's rigid rules,
And hastily condemn me.

MONTALBAN.

Fear not that.

I owe you far too much, lightly to censure.

VICTORIA.

'Tis in your pow'r to owe me yet much more,
If you object not to my terms.

MONTALBAN.

What are they ?

VICTORIA.

I ask not wealth, for I've already more
Than I desire or want ; more ample pow'r
Than that I now possess would not avail me ;
Were I to wish for rank more dignified,

I should resemble one, who on the brow
Of a tall mountain stands, and looks in vain
For objects more exalted than himself.

MONTALBAN.

What more can you desire?

VICTORIA.

What avail these,
And all the blessings rank and wealth can bring,
If there be no responsive heart to share them?

MONTALBAN.

Have you then fail'd to meet with such a heart?

VICTORIA.

Alas! the fated hour was not yet come,
When to its destin'd victor mine should stoop,
And own itself subdued.

MONTALBAN.

Are you then fram'd
Of substance so insensible?

VICTORIA.

Ah no!

I'm but too feeble. Were I to disclose
My secret thoughts—Grant me your fair construction—
Think you, were I to offer to a man,
Reduc'd by fortune to distress and ruin,
My wealth, my wide possessions and myself,
I might not hope to meet a fair return?

MONTALBAN.

What man would hesitate to meet such proffer,
And dedicate each moment of his life
To prove his gratitude?

VICTORIA.

If so you think,
Tell me, sir, ought he to compel the woman,
To whose affection he is so indebted,
To make the first advances, to forego
The delicacy of her sex and station,
And make avowal of those feelings, which
Her fond confusion but too plainly speaks?
Say, sir, would you be so insensible?

MONTALBAN.

I, madam?

VICTORIA.

Yes, sir, you.

MONTALBAN.

Madam, I know not
How my opinion—If the gentleman
Should feel a similar affection,
I should suppose—

VICTORIA.

Nay, sir, I pray you answer
My question plainly. Make the case your own.
What would you do?

MONTALBAN.

I really cannot say—

Were there no pow'rful motive to prevent him,
 A gallant gentleman would doubtless spare
 A woman's blushes—

VICTORIA.

If you think so, sir,

Why does your conduct—I implore your pardon—

Your pity—I'm not us'd to sue—

MONTALBAN.

Good heav'n!

What mean you, madam?

VICTORIA.

If you will compel me

T'avow my weakness—know—'tis you who've won me!

Nay, start not, sir, but hear me out I pray.

I need not tell you how, when first I saw you,

My stubborn heart receiv'd a fond impression.

How strong it was, my conduct now may prove.

If, hearing my confession, you can meet it

With mutual love, myself, my all, are yours.

MONTALBAN.

Your frankness, lady, justifies my own.

I know the value of the gift you offer,

But I am wanting in a fit return.

VICTORIA.

All the return I ask for is your heart.

MONTALBAN.

Mine, were it free, were little worth your having;
But, such as 'tis, 'twas long ago bestow'd
On one, who gave me in return her own.

VICTORIA.

And if she did, what right has she to expect
Thus to monopolize affection? No!
Such fancies are romantic. Ev'ry day
Bears witness to new vows of constancy,
Which on the morrow vanish into air.
Man's constancy! 'Tis grown into a proverb.

MONTALBAN.

I pray you, lady, pardon me; I wish
Not to repeat what may appear discourteous.

VICTORIA.

If I've a rival then, tell me who is
The happy fair who has engross'd your heart?

MONTALBAN.

That is a secret, deeply buried here.
I cannot name her.

VICTORIA.

That's suspicious, sir,
I doubt your constancy is fix'd on one,

Who does but little honour to your choice.

MONTALBAN. *(aside)*

Such doubts are no impeachment of her worth.

I do her justice.

VICTORIA. *(aside)*

Be she what she may,

The vows you speak of now no more are binding.

She's absent, lost to you—

MONTALBAN. *(aside)*

Aye, lost indeed!

VICTORIA. *(aside)*

Then are you free, then may you form new ties,

And all my flatt'ring hopes may be fulfill'd,

Think what a sacrifice I make—reflect—

MONTALBAN. *(aside)*

Lady, 'twould better suit you to reflect.

You ask a heart—a heart which is not mine.

Were I a villain, I might proffer it;

But truth and honour dictate my refusal!

VICTORIA. *(aside)*.

What noble constancy! Were I but certain

I were its object—I must leave him now,

Ere my impetuous feelings master me,

And prove it by a second trial.—*(To Montalban)*—Sir,

If I have gone beyond the privilege

Which custom grants my sex, I crave forgiveness.

Reflect on what I've said. Such proffers may
 Deserve your serious thought. Meantime, I pray,
 Consider these apartments as your own,
 And those belonging to them as your servants.
 There is an ample garden 'neath the ramparts,
 Where you may take the air. When next we meet,
 I trust my suit will prove more welcome to you.
[Exit Victoria.]

MONTALEAN.

Th' unrav'ling of this myst'ry is yet stranger
 Than its commencement. Did I hear her rightly?
 An offer of herself? She seems most lovely—
 Of all her wealth? And she has princely riches—
 Rank, honours, dignities? They're tempting baits,
 All purchasable by the simple gift
 Of my poor heart and hand. A word will do it—
 But then that word for ever brands me villain.
 No, poverty! I will not thus exchange thee;
 Thou'rt honest, and I'll hug thee to my heart,
 'Till I can give thee up without a blush.
 But hold—did not my tempter name a garden?
 It may afford me means t' escape—Who'rt thou?

Enter Roderigo.

RODERIGO.

I'm one—(*aside*)—Beshrew me! but he bears it bravely;
 He looks as if that garb were nat'ral to him—

(*To Montalban*) I'm one to whom the lady of this castle
Hath giv'n commission to attend on you.

MONTALBAN.

'Tis more than I require. But hark thee, friend,
What is thy bounteous lady's name?

RODERIGO.

Her name?

Did she not tell thee?

MONTALBAN.

No.

RODERIGO.

Not tell it?—(*aside*)—Humph!

I smell the matter now.—(*To Montalban*).—As for her
name,

I'm but a servant, sir, and may not choose
To go beyond mine orders. I'm grown grey,
As you may see, good sir, in servitude,
And, in the course of a laborious life,
I have made one discov'ry.

MONTALBAN.

What is that?

RODERIGO.

That, when my lady for peculiar reasons
Keeps a thing secret, I've no right to blab.

MONTALBAN.

But why, when thus she brings me to her house,

And prodigally show's down bounties on me,
Should she conceal herself?

RODERIGO.

Nay, that I know not.
She uses her own pleasure. But time passes,
And, what is worse, while we are thus discoursing,
Your dinner cools.

MONTALBAN.

I have no appetite.

RODERIGO.

That's strange—I should have thought the keen sea air
And your cold bath would rather have increas'd it.
There's a repast within might tempt a hermit.

MONTALBAN.

It tempts not me. I rather would prefer
To walk abroad, and view the various beauties
Which lie around this sumptuous edifice.
Your lady, sir, made mention of a garden.
Pray which way lies it?

RODERIGO.

There, beneath the ramparts.
The readiest way to it is through the hall,
Where your repast awaits you. I'll conduct you.

MONTALBAN.

Be it so then. I'll follow you.

RODERIGO.

That's well.

Take an old foolish man's advice for once,
 And, when good fortune courts you, do not scruple
 To enjoy her favours.—This way, please you, sir.

[Exit.

SCENE II.

Another Apartment in De Siloa Castle.

Enter Ferdinand.

FERDINAND.

Thank heav'n! a short reflection has convinc'd me
 How nearly to the verge of shame and ruin
 My too presumptuous hopes had tempted me.
 The vain illusion which obscur'd my judgment
 Is vanish'd, and I once more am myself.
 But I am weak—I blush to think how weak,
 How little able to oppose the tide
 Of mast'ring passion. I must place a bar
 Betwixt the dear temptation and myself.
 Farewell, my Clara! I will fly those charms,
 Whose potency my heart cannot resist.
 Farewell for ever! Honour calls me from thee;
 My sword shall be my fortune; I will use it
 Against my country's foes, and either reap

A harvest of renown, or nobly die!

Enter Guzman.

GUZMAN.

Heyday! who talks of dying when I'm here?
What, Signor Ferdinand! Bless me, good sir,
What is the matter? Why you look as pale—

FERDINAND.

Away! no trifling now. I'm not dispos'd
To relish your buffoonery.

GUZMAN.

How's that?

Leave you alone? I'll tell you what, young sir,
I know not what you're pleas'd to think of me,
But this I know—there is not in Madrid
A pharmacopolist or surgeon, sir,
To whom I'd vail my bonnet. I have learnt—

FERDINAND.

It may be so; but there is one thing more
It might behove you still to learn.

GUZMAN.

What's that?

FERDINAND.

Discretion, sir, to know on whom and when
You may unbidden thus intrude yourself.
I choose to be alone.—What! more intruders!

Enter Don Lopez.

LOPEZ (*yawning*).

Yaw ! How my head's confus'd ! That sack was naught,
Most villainously naught ! I know not how
I was o'ertaken thus.—Whom have we here ?
What, my young fighting sir ?—I do remember
We had a tilting bout, but we're friends now.
Where is my lady, and my pretty Clara,
My bride that is to be ?

FERDINAND.

Olara your bride ?

LOPEZ.

Why not ? There's nought so wonderful, methinks,
That a young sanguine fellow, like myself,
Should like a pretty girl. I warrant me,
We shall become a mighty happy couple.
Do you know, I'm monstrously in love with her ?

FERDINAND.

Monstrous indeed ! Lambs may consort with wolves,
And doves associate with the felon hawk,
Ere she unite with thee !

LOPEZ.

Phew ! here's a noise !

I'll tell you what, young man—when I'm resolv'd,
'Tis not your pleasure, nor your big looks neither

Shall fright me from my purpose. Here, sir, here—
(Striking his neck)

I carry arguments you can't confute—
Crowns, sir, pistoles, and good doubloons to boot
Of wond'rous efficacy to remove
Obstructions—

GUZMAN. I perceive that you'll

Not so good as my elixir!

Talk of obstructions! Pshaw! Why now, sir, (to *Lopes*) you
Shall judge of it yourself. I'm glad I thought on't;

'Twill suit you to a hair.—(To *Ferdinand*) There, do you
see him?

What a swoln belly, and two legs like millspouts!
No subject can be more unpromising;
And yet, sir, I will lay you ten to one,

In half a dozen doses I'll bring down
That tun of his, in half a dozen more

Make him as lank and limber as a greyhound—

LOPEZ.

Why, thou half-witted puppy! Who art thou
That dares thus prate of me? Elixir truly!—

Physic my lady's lap-dog, an thou wil'st,
He may be sweeter for't.—Look on me, mongrel!

Survey this portly body, 'Tis well lin'd
With solid and substantial food. These legs, too,

Are firm and muscular, proportion'd columns
Well fitted to support such superstructure.
Why, I am made for immortality;
My very blood's a distillation
From gen'rous sack and fragrant malvoisie.
Away, thou quack! thou mingler of base drugs!
Thou lank anatomy!

Enter Margaretta.

MARGARETTA.

What's here to do?
I wonder, sir, you take upon you thus—

LOPEZ.

Nay, good madonna, I am not to blame.
This scurvy med'cine-monger took upon him—

GUZMAN.

Aye, aye, deny it; but I'll say't again—

LOPEZ.

Let me come at him! I will teach you manners!

GUZMAN.

Aye, you may bluster—

LOPEZ.

Am I catch thee, sirrah!

GUZMAN (*dodging about, pursued by Lopez*).

Pray stand between us—If I had thee once
Fairly in hand, I'd work thee into shape—
I'd ply thee with elixirs, lotions, potions—

Pray keep him off—Cathartics—

LOPEZ.

By Saint Anthony!

I'll maul thee—I've no breath to follow him—

GUZMAN.

Thou'rt one disease from head to foot—a mountain
Of bodily infirmity—a mass—

LOPEZ.

Let me get at him—

MARGARETTA.

(*She pushes Guzman out.*) Nay, you shall retire.

And you, Don Lopez, too—

LOPEZ.

A paltry knave!

An I lay hold of him—

MARGARETTA.

Prithce be calm,

And get yourself accoutred as befits you.

My lady and her niece would think it strange

To see you thus.

LOPEZ.

Why truly, as thou say'st,

My raiment is rather in deshabille.

I'll to my chamber and refresh it.—Gomez!

To physic me indeed!—What, Gomez, ho!

[*Exit Lopez.*]

FERDINAND.

Tell me, good Marg'ret, what did the wretch mean
By talking about Clara as his bride?
An old debauch'd voluptuary like him
To form such expectation!

MARGARETTA.

He has broach'd it.

However to my lady.

FERDINAND.

Well, what said she?

MARGARETTA.

Nay, look not so alarm'd. One might suppose
You had more int'rest in the question than
You care to avow.

FERDINAND.

An int'rest? Aye, the strongest,

In what relates so mainly to her welfare.

You cannot think it strange.

MARGARETTA.

Oh no! quite natural.

I warrant me, she'd feel the same for you,
Were any antiquated dame to court you.
Ah Ferdinand! if you would keep a secret,
Learn to command your looks, and teach your eyes
A little stricter discipline.

FERDINAND.

Indeed

You go too far—Nay, prithee, jeer me not.

If a presumptuous hope e'er glanc'd across me—

MARGARETTA.

You welcom'd it.—You see I've made remarks.

Well, things may turn out other than you look for.

FERDINAND.

What mean you?

MARGARETTA.

What I'm not at leisure now

To tell you more of. I expect my lady,

Who has some orders for me. But I've giv'n you

Food for reflection.

FERDINAND.

If I might presume

To entertain such hopes—

MARGARETTA.

Nay, if you will not

Believe me when I bid you entertain them—

FERDINAND.

I know you for my friend, and will believe you.

MARGARETTA.

That's well.—But go—I hear my lady coming—

Go—say no more.

[Exit Ferdinand]

Enter Victoria.

VICTORIA.

Is ev'ry thing prepar'd

As I directed? Roderigo tells me

Montalban is about to walk abroad,

And, from his manner and some words he utter'd,

Conjectures 'tis his purpose to escape.

We have no time to lose. Set Roderigo

And Guzman on the watch; let them take heed

He do not scale the wall. As for the gates,

They are securely fastened.

MARGARETTA.

Had you done

As I advis'd you, and reveal'd yourself

When you was with him, you had 'scap'd this trouble.

VICTORIA.

While there remains a doubt of his affection,

He ne'er shall know me. 'Tis his heart I aim at;

If that prove true, my pains are well bestow'd.

MARGARETTA.

What more can you devise to ascertain it?

VICTORIA.

Love has a thousand ways to work his ends.

Here is an engine which he bids me use—

[Giving her a portrait case.]

Take it—Upon the spreading orange tree,

Which overhangs the fountain, place it so
He may not fail to see it. Make good haste.

[*Exit Margaret*

Now comes th'eventful crisis of my fate.
Aid me, kind heav'n, and arm my lab'ring heart
With fortitude the trial to sustain
On which my bliss or mis'ry must depend!

[*E.*

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Night. A Garden, illuminated with Lamps interspersed among the Trees. On one Side, a Fountain overhung by an Orange Tree, on the other, a Wall and Gate.

Enter Roderigo, Guzman, and Margaretta.

MARGARETTA.

I TELL you both, such are my lady's orders.

As she suspects the stranger may attempt

This way to escape, she wills you here to watch,

And, if he try to pass, to bar his way.

RODERIGO.

Truly there seems no need of these precautions.

A fellow brought from rags and misery,

Cloth'd like a lord, and treated like a prince,

Will never run away from such good quarters.

MARGARETTA.

Be that as't may, my lady's orders are

That you keep guard. So see you do it well.

GUZMAN.

But, Mrs. Marg'ret, surely our good lady
 Has not reflected on the consequences
 Which may ensue, if thus we stand expos'd
 To the cold dews and noxious exhalations,
 Which at this time of the year, are so injurious
 To tender constitutions, such as mine.
 (*Coughs*) I do protest I've caught a cold already.

RODERIGO.

If that be all, the mischief is not great.

GUZMAN.

Not great? How can you say so, Roderigo?
 I've known such instances of bad effects
 Arising from a cold, it would amaze you.
 I'll tell you a remarkable occurrence.
 I had a patient once—

RODERIGO.

A patient, say'st thou?
 Now tell me honestly. Did'st talk to him?

GUZMAN.

Aye marry did I.

RODERIGO.

And he still was patient?

GUZMAN.

Pa—patient—Oh! that's very good indeed!

Well, you're a wag.

MARGARETTA. I'll go to bed.

You know my lady's pleasure,
And will be watchful.

GUZMAN.

Would I had bethought me
As a preservative against these dews,
To bring with me a bottle—

RODERIGO.

Would thou hadst,
Full of rich malmsey—

GUZMAN.

What do you talk of malmsey?
I mean my cordial water. You have heard
Of Signor Guzman's cordial water, which
Is universally confess'd to be
The only sov'reign remedy against catarrhs,
Obstructions and defluxions? 'Tis distill'd
From certain simples—

RODERIGO.

So I should suppose,
If you're the manufacturer.

GUZMAN.

Hey? How?
The manufacturer? Oh ho! that's good.
You had me there, I own.

RODERIGO.

Nay, worse than that—

I have you here.

GUZMAN.

Good, very good again!

There's no escaping you.

RODERIGO.

That's my complaint.

Would I could remedy it!—But silence—look—

Who's that approaching?

GUZMAN.

Where?

RODERIGO.

Among the trees—

GUZMAN.

'Tis he whom we must watch.

RODERIGO.

Then to your post.

*(They stand aside.)**Enter Montalban.*

MONTALBAN.

I lose myself amid this labyrinth.

Here seems an op'ning—Ha! a gate and wall?

Should but the gate be open—Let me try—

No, strongly fasten'd—But what have we here?

(Perceives the picture-case hanging on the tree.)

It seems as if inviting me to look
 At it's contents. (*Opens it*) Good heav'n! What is't I see?
 Have I my senses?—Can it—Yes!—'Tis she!
 'Tis my Victoria's self! just as she was,
 When to my arms she came a virgin bride,
 Array'd in native loveliness! This is a prize
 Beyond my fondest hope.—How came it here?—
 No matter how it came—It now is mine;
 I'll lodge it next my heart, and keep it as
 A talisman to guide me to herself.
 Now for the wall—Let me but scale it once—

*(As he is mounting the wall, he is seized by Roderigo
 and Guzman.)*

RODERIGO.

Who passes there?

MONTALBAN.

Confusion!—Who are you

Who thus presume—

RODERIGO.

We have authority.

My lady gave us orders. That's enough.

GUZMAN.

Aye, 'tis her own prescription.

MONTALBAN.

Give me way!

What right has she or you to keep me here?

RODERIGO.

You'd better ask that question of herself,
For lo! this way she comes.

Enter Victoria, veiled.

VICTORIA.

So, sir, 'tis well ;

I find you are an honourable man,
Who may be trusted out on your parole.
(*To Roderigo and Guzman*)—You've done your duty, and
may now retire.

[*Excunt Roderigo and Guzman.*]

Is't thus you treat me, sir? Was't not enough
To meet with proud disdain my proffer'd love,
That thus with scorn augmented you attempt
To punish me for over-confidence?
Where can you go, ungrateful as you are,
Where love like mine, unfetter'd, unrestrain'd,
Courts your acceptance, and at once presents
In lieu of poverty, neglect and ruin,
All you can hope of beauty, wealth and pow'r?

MONTALBAN.—*If you please.*

True, madam; poverty, neglect and ruin
Have long been my companions: but were fate
To double ev'ry sorrow I've sustain'd,
And leave me yet more destitute of hope,
I'd still possess one treasure—conscious honour.

VICTORIA.

Keep it inviolate ; but do me justice.
 Whate'er opinion, sir, my recent conduct
 May have induc'd you to conceive of me,
 I am not one of those, whom madd'ning passion
 Can tempt beyond the rigid line of virtue :
 But fortune has enabled me to choose
 The path best suited to my inclination ;
 And, though the world fastidiously may deem
 The course I take unsuited to my sex,
 I scorn a law which man, not heav'n, ordain'd—

MONTALBAN.

No more, I pray. How can you thus forget
 The noblest attribute of female worth,
 That native delicacy, which adorns
 And dignifies your sex, thus to descend
 To gain a heart devoted to another ?
 Had it but for a moment swerv'd from her,
 This treasure, which kind providence has sent me,
 Had kept me faithful to her. (*Shewing the portrait.*)

Look upon it—

As in a mirror trace the virtues there,
 The candour, gentleness, and innocence,
 Which won my heart, and follow her example.

VICTORIA.

When this was drawn, she was in youth's first bloom,

Years had not trac'd their wrinkles on her brow,
 Nor care had faded those resplendent tints.
 Were you to meet her now—

MONTALBAN.

She'd still be lovely,
 Still more by ev'ry tie endear'd to me!
 Age would but purify her spotless soul,
 And ev'ry vestige of corroding care
 Would prove a fond memorial of affection.

VICTORIA.

Have wealth and splendour then no charms t'allure you?
 Has poverty no terrors?

MONTALBAN.

Not with her!
 Were our poor dwelling some half ruin'd cot,
 Whose mould'ring walls could scarce withstand the force
 Of the sharp-piercing wind and beating rain,
 Our food the scanty sustenance we drew
 From the cold ling'ring hand of charity,
 With her 'twere princely luxury to share it.

VICTORIA.

You speak as if a woman's constancy
 Were proof 'gainst absence. Do you think that one
 So fair, so young, as this resemblance shews her,
 Has not been tempted? And, if tempted, think you
 She has been able to maintain her faith?

MONTALBAN.

If innate purity and worth can warrant
 A woman's faith, I am assur'd of her's.
 That doubt, thank heav'n! never disturb'd my peace.
 But, had she been forgetful of her vows,
 Inconstant, false, lost to herself and me,
 Though I had wept her fall, the dear remembrance
 Of what she was had still preserv'd me her's.

VICTORIA.

No more, no more! My doubts are at an end!
 Henceforth we'll live to joy!—Gen'rous Montalban!—

Enter Gomez, pursued by Don Lopez.

GOMEZ.

Help, help, good christians!—Will you murder me?

LOPEZ.

Give me my box, thou scapegrace! give it me!

GOMEZ.

I know nought of your box—'tis in your chamber.

LOPEZ.

What! rob me in my sleep?—Surrender it,
 Or by Saint Anthony—

VICTORIA.

What mean you, sir?
 Have you your senses?

LOPEZ.

Heyday! Who art thou,

Thus dizen'd out with a convenient veil ?

No matter, so thou'lt help me to lay hold of him—

That pilf'ring varlet—Let him not get by thee—

Victoria.—What has he done?

What has he done?

Lopez.—He has robb'd me of a casket.

He has robb'd me of a casket.

Worth a king's ransom.

Gomez.—I shall be glad to see it.

As I hope for mercy

I touch'd it not, He was stark drunk e'en now,

And is'nt sober yet.

Lopez.—I shall be glad to see it.

I'll hamper thee—

Thou sha'n't escape me.—*(To Victoria)*—Hark thee—

thou art nimble—

Run to the castle, send some quickly hither

To apprehend the rogue. Meantime I'll watch him.

Nay, prithee, do not linger—I'll reward thee.

Victoria.—*(aside)*—

This turn is fortunate.—*(To Lopez)* Well, sir, I'll get

Stay here, and keep him safely. I'll send some

Who'll do your bus'ness.

Lopez.—

That is kind. But hasten.

[Exit Victoria.]

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ (add) two b seven and T
Can I believe in myself? He himself remain C
...and you are writing I Goneray and filling out T

Oh! have I caught thee, varlet? Now confess.
I'll put thee to the question. *Draws his sword.*

GOMEZ (bicycling).

Put up thy sword—I cannot bear to look on it.
As I'm an honest man I won't do not.

Honesty, forsooth, my liege, 'tis a pretty proof
Of honesty, to take another's goods.
Wer't thou not trusted with it? Tell me, caitiff,
What can a breach of trust deserve, but hanging?
—Hark!—
Aye, what indeed? Look on him!

What makes thee tremble so? Hath conscious guilt
 Brought thee to this? O Villain! Speak to me, confess
 Where is mine injured wife, where hast thou lodged
 The treasures, which I credulously trusted
 To thy perfidious care? SCENE II

(aside). But hasten.

So, so ! he knows not

Whose house this is!

MONTALBAN.

Wilt thou not answer me?

I'll make thee find thy speech.

LOPEZ.

I'm so amaz'd

To meet thee on a sudden, when I thought—

How cam'st thou here?

MONTALBAN.

This morning I was wreck'd

On the adjoining shore. I was alone

Preserv'd—

LOPEZ.

Did'st thou save nothing?

MONTALBAN.

Not a doit.

But cease this questioning, and answer plainly

To what I ask.

LOPEZ (*aside*).

Let's see—Shipwreck'd, dost say?

Lost ev'ry thing?—'Tis well—I know my cue.

(*To Montalban*)—Aye, aye, I'll answer thee—Why, sure

assurance

Surpasses all conception! Thou, Montalban?

My dearest friend, my worthiest benefactor?

Thou'rt an impostor!

MONTALBAN.

Dar'st thou face me down—

LOPEZ.

Aye, marry, thou shalt find I dare. Go to!

Did I not know Montalban?

GOMEZ.

So did I;

And, if I trust my eyesight, there he stands.

LOPEZ.

Away, thou base companion!

GOMEZ.

No, I wo'n't—

A figo for thee! I'll believe my senses.

(To Montalban)—Doth not your worship call to mind one

Gomez,

Who once at Lagos was your faithful servant?

MONTALBAN.

Full well do I remember thee.

GOMEZ.

I said so!

Well, what have you to say, Don Gongora?

I'm valiant, now I've got a friend to back me:

LOPEZ.

An I lay hold of thee—

Enter Ferdinand.

FERDINAND.

What's here to do?

Is this a brothel or a carrier's inn,
That thus ye clamour?—Who are ye? Don Lopez!

LOPEZ.

I'm glad you're come. I have been robb'd, sir, robb'd,
And might have been assassinated too,
Had you not succour'd me.

FERDINAND.

Been robb'd of what?

LOPEZ.

A casket, sir, more precious than my life.
There stand the culprits.

GOMEZ.

Pray, your honour, hear me.

'Tis a false charge. I'm his own servant, sir.

FERDINAND.

That makes the matter worse, if it be true.

LOPEZ.

Aye, so it does, young gentleman.—A word—
Examine them apart. While they're together
You'll ne'er get at the truth. Begin with him,
My varlet there. Trust t'other rogue to me,
I'll give a good account of him, I warrant.

Enter Rodrigo and Guzman.

RODRIGO.

Is there one here who calls himself Montalban?

MONTALBAN.

That is my name.

RODRIGO.

Then am I order'd, sir,
To put this precious casket in your hands.

LOPEZ.

'Tis mine! I'll have it!

RODRIGO (to Lopez).

Keep your distance, sir.

(To Montalban) Take it, and keep it, sir; 'tis fairly yours.

It holds a statement of your dealings with him.

MONTALBAN.

This is indeed most wonderful.

LOPEZ.

'Tis false!

Merely a base contrivance to defraud me.

(To Ferdinand) Don't let 'em, worthy sir, impose on you.

This fellow, sir, is a confederate.

RODRIGO.

I'll shew you what I am. I've something more
To say to you. You are my pris'ner, sir,
You have offended 'gainst our Spanish laws.

That casket holds a proof of breach of trust,
For which you'll answer in another place.

LOPEZ.

Hush, hush, I pray thee. Do not speak so loud.
Thou art an honest fellow, Roderigo;
I know thou'st sense enough to understand me.
I'll give thee fifty ducats to release me.

RODERIGO.

What's that you say?

LOPEZ.

I'll make 'em up an hundred—
Two hundred—wo'n't that do?—Three—four—five
hundred—

RODERIGO.

Would'st make 'em up five millions, I'd not take 'em.
Dost think to bribe me?

GOMEZ.

So! the tide is turn'd.

Who's the rogue now? Who's turn is't to be hang'd?

GUZMAN.

There seems indeed to be a strange revulsion.
'Tis a most sudden crisis, which denotes
A speedy termination of your ease.
There is but one prescription now remaining—
A quantum sufficit of hemp. *Probatum est.*

LOPEZ.

(To Roderigo) Help me to kneel, I pray thee.—(To Montalban)—I confess

I have offended. Be not too severe—

Consider I'm a poor old man, bow'd down

With much infirmity. I will restore

All I possess of thine with interest—

'Tis all thou can'st require. What can it profit

To hang a miserable wretch like me?

MONTALBAN.

Thy meanness now exceeds thy former guilt.

Let that of which thou wrong'd'st me be restor'd,

And live disgrac'd. There are some other matters,

Of infinite importance to my peace—

LOPEZ.

I'll tell thee ev'ry thing.

MONTALBAN.

Look thou dost so.

But they're too delicate to be discuss'd

Unless in private. Hence! I'll see thee soon.

I pray you, gentlemen, let him be guarded

'Till he perform his promise.

LOPEZ (to Roderigo).

Help me up!

I'm now, it seems, to learn a new vocation,

That of refunding. 'Tis a bitter pill,

Hard of digestion. Humph!—Well, after all,
I have enough remaining to console me!

[*Exeunt Lopez, Rodrigo, Guzman, and Gomez.*]

FERDINAND.

See that you keep him safely.—What a compound
Of insolence and meanness!—(To Montalban)—But for
you, sir,

If, when I knew not of your quality,
I paid you less respect than was your due,
I hope to have your pardon.

MONTALBAN.

Nay, good sir,

You acted like a noble gentleman.
But hold—I surely cannot be mistaken—
Are you not?—Yes—you are my brave preserver,
Whose gen'rous kindness sav'd me from the waves!

FERDINAND.

Sav'd you, sir? Are you then the shipwreck'd man,
Whom heav'n permitted me to save? In truth,
I knew you not again.

MONTALBAN.

I marvel not;

I am so chang'd, I hardly know myself.
But the strong likeness, which you bear to one
Whose dear remembrance rests upon my heart,
Insures my recollection. May I ask

Who were the parents bless'd by such a son?

FERDINAND.

I'm a poor orphan, one who never knew
A parent's tenderness. On the wide world,
Without a friend to cherish or support me,
I had been cast, had not the noble lady,
Who owns this castle, pitied and sustain'd me.
She, like my guardian angel, rescued me
From want and misery; her indulgent care
Rear'd me to manhood, taught me to become
Such as I am—

MONTALBAN.

Such goodness might atone
For frailties greater far than those she owns.

Enter Victoria veiled, and Clara.

(To Victoria) Lady, we spoke of you and of your virtues.
This worthy youth, whose feeling heart o'erflows
With gratitude, hath told me what he owes you.
Heav'n, that delights in works of charity,
Will show'r its amplest blessings on your head.

VICTORIA.

Next to th' approval of my heart, your praise
Is grateful to my feelings. Nay, believe me,
Whate'er of my past conduct you may deem,
The moment's come, when, all disguise thrown off,
In my true character I show myself.

If, to repay the mis'ries I've sustain'd,
 Heav'n yet has blessings in reserve for me,
 'Tis by thy hand alone it can bestow them.
 I've tried thee, I have prov'd thee, my Montalban!
 Thou'rt true to love and thy Victoria,
 And thus (*unveiling*) I hold thee to my heart!

MONTALBAN.

Thou art,
 Thou art mine own Victoria! Yes, I hold thee
 To my fond heart which beats alone for thee!
 My lov'd, my long lost wife! thus once again
 To view thee—Heav'nly powers! it is too much
 For my enfeebled senses to sustain!
 Oh my best love, give me a moment, least
 My throbbing breast burst with excess of joy
 Too exquisite for man!

VICTORIA.

Oh! let these arms
 Support thee, let thy too long widow'd wife
 Hail the return of peace and happiness!
 And yet I dread—Dearest Montalban! can you—
 Can you forgive me for the stratagem
 I plann'd to try your truth?

MONTALBAN.

I can't forgive,
 Where there's no cause for blame. Joy, gratitude

And endless love now occupy my soul,
Scarce leaving me remembrance of the past.

VICTORIA.

Come, Ferdinand, and you, my dearest Clara,
Behold my long lamented lord restor'd
To happiness.

MONTALBAN.

They seem as if kind nature
Had form'd them for each other.

VICTORIA.

True—Nay, Clara,
You need not blush. You know you have confess'd—

CLARA.

Dear madam, surely you don't mean to tell him—

VICTORIA.

Are you asham'd, my love, to own the truth?

CLARA.

Asham'd, ma'am? No—but I feel so confus'd—
It is so awkward all at once, you know—

VICTORIA.

Take courage, dearest—I have seen your love
From your first infancy have trac'd its course,
And in the prospect of your future bliss
Found the sole consolation of my cares.

FERDINAND.

Do you then sanction my presumptuous hopes?

VICTORIA.

I do most fully.

FERDINAND.

Oh for words to speak
The feelings of my soul!—And you, my Clara,
Will you confirm my transports?

CLARA.

Can you doubt
If Clara's heart be your's?—There is my pledge—
(Gives her hand.)

FERDINAND.

For ever be it sacred!—(To Victoria) My best friend!
My gen'rous patroness!

VICTORIA.

Postpone your thanks.
One sacred duty yet must be fulfill'd
Ere she can be your bride: for know, young man,
I have a solemn vow, witness'd in heav'n,
That she in holy church shall ne'er be your's,
Until your union shall be ratified
By him, whose judgment should decide your fate.

FERDINAND.

Who is this unknown arbiter?

VICTORIA.

Your father!

FERDINAND.

My father!—Who—where is he?

VICTORIA (*pointing to Montalban*).

There, behold him!

FERDINAND (*kneeling*).

My father!

MONTALBAN.

Thou? Art thou indeed my son?

Come to thy father's arms, and take his blessing!

Was I for this preserv'd? Mysterious heav'n!

'Twas thine all-working providence that led him

To snatch his father from a wat'ry grave,

And crown him with excess of happiness!

FERDINAND.

Extatic thought! To save a parent's life,

To hear him call me his deliverer,

To have his blessing—(*to Victoria*) Oh my more than
mother,

Speak to me—sooth the transports of my soul

Rack'd with excess of joy! (*Kneels to her.*)

VICTORIA.

Rise, my best lov'd,

My gallant Ferdinand! and turn to him,

Whose sanction must confirm your cherish'd hope

Of happiness.—(*To Montalban*) I have impos'd upon you

A pleasing duty—

THE STORM.

MONTALBAN.

Gladly I fulfil it.

Thus let me join the hands of those, whose hearts

Love has united. Now let pleasure reign,

Be ev'ry face around us grac'd with smiles

To crown the transports of this happy day !

[*Exeunt Omnes.*]

THE END.

THE
CRUSADERS.

A COMEDY.

IN TWO ACTS.

Awake! What ho! Brabantio! Thieves! thieves! thieves!
Look to your house, your daughter, and your bags

SHAKESPEARE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

The EARL OF CLARE.

BARON VON POPPINDORFF.

SIR ALBERT DE MORTIMER.

SIR REGINALD DE CLIFFORD.

SIR HILDEBRAND, Attendant on the Baron.

FATHER AMBROSE, Almoner at Clare Castle.

MAURICE, Esquire to Sir Albert.

GEOFFRY, Butler at Clare Castle.

ARTHUR, Porter there.

SIMKIN, Servant to the Baron.

ETHELINDE, Daughter to the Earl of Clare.

MATILDA, her Attendant.

Servants, Peasants, &c.

Scene—Clare Castle, and its Vicinity.

THE
CRUSADERS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in Clare Castle.

Enter Matilda.

MATILDA.

WHAT a horrible dull place this old castle is! Not a soul worth looking at, and nobody to speak to either, but the old earl and father Ambrose. I'm sure, if I were my young lady, I'd no more stay to be pent up with such a set of frights—

Enter Ethelinde.

ETHELINDE.

Heigho!

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F

MATILDA.

Heigho!—That's a melancholy note, ma'am; worse than the cuckoo's in a rainy June. The very sound of it puts me in the vapours.

ETHELINDE.

I'm very uncomfortable.—Heigho!

MATILDA.

Nay, you must not go on in this way; you'll make yourself ill in good earnest. You have no idea how it alters you. I'll be hang'd if my lord does not begin to suspect—

ETHELINDE.

Good heavens! What do you mean?

MATILDA.

I'll tell you, ma'am. I happen'd to meet him yesterday in the long gallery. "Can you tell me," said he, "what makes my daughter look so shockingly?"—He said so indeed, ma'am.—Then, ma'am, he went on, "I suspect," said he, "that all is not right here." And with that he thump'd his breast and star'd me full in the face. "I'm sorry," said I, "that your lordship has any thing the matter with you there; you'd better," said I, "take some advice; father Ambrose," said I—"Father fiddlestick," cried he: "I mean my daughter, hussy!" said he—"Poor dear lady," said I, "she can do you no

“good.”—“But I can do her some good,” said he; “a husband,” said he—

ETHELINDE.

How you alarm me—Surely either you or father Ambrose must have dropt some hints—

MATILDA.

I, ma'am!—If ever I dropt a syllable either about Sir Albert, or Maurice, or your secret marriage, or my own—

ETHELINDE.

Hush, my dear girl! don't talk so loud.

MATILDA.

For me to blab indeed! Or for father Ambrose—

ETHELINDE.

I believe you; but every thing alarms me. Alas! What have I not suffer'd, during the three tedious years since my Albert was torn from me! Never once to have heard from him, not even to know whether he yet be living—

MATILDA.

I'm sure, ma'am, I've a fellow feeling with you; for, if you have lost Sir Albert, I have lost my poor Maurice, and a kind-hearted soul he was, and a good husband too, though he was no gentleman. But why do I say so?—For he was promoted to be Sir Albert's esquire in the

Holy Land, and that's a gentleman's post. But come, ma'am, keep up your spirits.

ETHELINDE.

That is beyond my power. Even hope itself seems to have abandon'd me.

MATILDA.

Heaven forbid! It's the best friend we have.

ETHELINDE.

Aye, girl, but like many other friends, it is apt to desert us when we most require its aid.

MATILDA.

Well, after all, 'twould be some comfort to know whether our husbands are likely to come back to us.

ETHELINDE.

Fie, Matilda, what a way of talking!

MATILDA.

Lord! ma'am, how hastily you take one up! I was thinking what Sir Reginald would say—

ETHELINDE.

Sir Reginald! What's he to me?

MATILDA.

Not so much, poor man, as I fancy you are to him. He does so look at you, and sigh—and he's a handsome man, ma'am, and a generous one too! let me tell you.

ETHELINDE.

What is all this to me?

MATILDA.

Nay, ma'am, I don't know; but in my mind, if he were not so serious, he would be a very pretty fellow.

ETHELINDE.

If you go on in this way, I shall begin to suspect you.

MATILDA.

Me, ma'am! I wish I may never have worse luck. No, no! he flies at higher game.

ETHELINDE.

How you rattle! Sir Reginald is a gallant gentleman and my father's friend; but as for thinking of me, thank heaven! that is out of the question. But hark! Some one's coming I am sure.

MATILDA.

Dear ma'am! Nothing but a rat in the old wainscot.

ETHELINDE.

Nay, I am sure there is some one. As I live, my father and Sir Reginald. Don't you see them in the gallery?

MATILDA.

Sure enough they are there. If my lord is not giving him the history of old Sir Topaz and his picture he Don't be alarm'd, ma'am, they can't have heard a word. There, sit down and take your work—I'll sing you the ditty of Poor Ellen, and that will look natural, you know.

[Sings.]

Enter the Earl of Clare and Sir Reginald.

CLARE.

Heyday! here's a catterwauling!—I didn't know thou hadst this talent.

MATILDA.

Oh my lord! I have many perfections which your lordship has not been able to find out yet.

CLARE.

Certainly I have not made the discovery. Well, Ethy, so you did not expect us—we stole a march upon you.

ETHELINDE.

I did not expect your lordship so soon.

CLARE.

Why you seem sad, love.

ETHELINDE.

Matilda was singing a pathetic ballad, sir, of an unfortunate maiden, whose father tore her from her lover. It happen'd long ago.

CLARE.

Aye, I dare say. I've heard of such fathers. An old niggardly hunk, I warrant me. Fathers now-a-days are different sort of creatures. Come—don't look so grave. I'm not such a miserable, tyrannical puppy; I love my dear girl too well to treat her in that way. I can feel for you—

MATILDA.

Oh! your lordship's tender feelings are well known.

CLARE.

Not better than your assurance, Mrs. Pert! My tender feelings indeed!—Lookye, Ethy, so far from depriving thee of a lover, child, I wish to give thee one.—Come, come, never look so shy; I know it all—all about that little heart—You thought I couldn't find it out.

MATILDA.

Lack-a-day, my lord, you distress my lady so—it's not fair to joke about serious matters.

CLARE.

No, Ethy, I'm quite serious, I assure you; never more so in the whole course of my life. I have a husband for you, my girl—

MATILDA.

I hope your lordship will go through with your good work, and give me my husband too.

CLARE.

So! the disorder runs in the family, does it? Aye, aye, you may take him if you please, and I wish him joy of his bargain. But now, Ethy, to our business. What would you say now, if I were to throw you at once into a husband's arms?

ETHELINDE.

How—where—

CLARE.

Just by, love—close at hand—

ETHELINDE.

Oh dear sir! keep me not in suspense—say—say when,
how came he?

CLARE.

Half an hour ago—on horseback—(to Reginald)—
Now's your time—now or never—

MATILDA.

But, my lord, you see my lady's impatience! It's
quite cruel of you to keep her in suspense.

CLARE.

Egad! that's true—so it is indeed—Well, Ethy, my
dear, to make you happy at once, here he is!—(To
Reginald) Now for a look and a speech—kneel, you
happy dog!

REGINALD.

How shall I find words, madam—but heavens! you
tremble, madam, you—

MATILDA.

Stand out of the way—What's the matter, madam?

CLARE.

Nothing in the world but over joy. Leave her to me.

MATILDA.

Lean upon me, ma'am.—Pray, my lord, don't speak
to her.

ETHELINDE.

Matilda, is it you?—My head feels quite confus'd—I hardly know where I am—

CLARE.

In the drawing-room, dear, at the end of the gallery.

ETHELINDE.

Oh my dear father! if you have any compassion—if you love me—

CLARE.

Love thee, Ethy! Why, thou know'st I do, and so will Sir Reginald too.

MATILDA.

How can you go on so, my lord? Don't you see my lady is getting worse again?

CLARE.

Well, child—best go into the fresh air—sudden joy sometimes takes this turn. Go with her, Matilda—But hark thee—now we understand one another, the sooner the business is finish'd the better. We'll have the wedding to-morrow morning.

ETHELINDE.

Name not to-morrow!

CLARE.

No! why not? Is not to-morrow as good as any other day? You little simpleton! making such a fuss about nothing—

ETHELINDE.

Do let me speak to you, sir—

CLARE.

No sort of occasion—we understand you perfectly—there—get you gone—I'll take care of every thing—leave it all to me—

[*Exeunt Ethelinde and Matilda.*

Toll loll de roll! (*Sings*). Well, Reginald, you see I've done your business.

REGINALD.

I wish, my lord, I could discover such cause for triumph.

CLARE.

Why you've no more penetration—she could not conceal it. Not perceive her affection was fix'd?

REGINALD.

Not on me, I fear.

CLARE.

Not on you, sir? On whom else should it be fix'd?

REGINALD.

That is more than I know. But her visible confusion—

CLARE.

Pshaw! What a novice in love must you be, not to discover the trick of all that? She forgot herself a little for a moment, I must confess; though, when the first burst was over, she brought herself off in a great stile. Let the women alone for that, egad! There's not one of

'em—Her mother, poor dear woman! did just the same, when her father announc'd me as her future husband.

REGINALD.

But, my lord, if my conjecture should prove true—

CLARE.

Don't plague me with your Ifs, don't put me out of temper, when I never was so well pleas'd in my life; but go—do your duty—enquire after her health—do what you please—but get out of my way, for I must hold a council of war with my subaltern officers about the feast to-morrow. Egad! I'll make old Clare Castle ring again.—[*Exit Reginald.*]—Geoffry! Arthur!—What a cold blooded fellow that is now—Geoffry, I say!—Where are all the knaves?

Enter Geoffry and Arthur.

GEOFFRY.

Did your lordship's honour call?

CLARE.

Yes, my lordship's honour did call; and where were you, ye idle knaves, that you did'nt come when I call'd?

GEOFFRY.

I'll tell your lordship's honour all about it. We were sitting in the buttery, my lord, Arthur and I, just comfortable like as it were, drinking your worshipful honour's health in a horn of ale; for, said I to Arthur—

ARTHUR.

No, that's not it neither—I'll tell your lordship how it was. Says I to Geoffry, Geoffry, says I—

GEOFFRY. (*to Arthur*).

Have you no more manners than to stand prating thus? Can't you learn of me? When do I put in my oar?—(*to Clare*) It was all as I told your noble lordship; for, says I to Arthur—

CLARE.

With all my soul. Do hold your tongue, and attend to me. I am about to marry my daughter to Sir Reginald de Clifford, and have fix'd on to-morrow morning for the wedding—

GEOFFRY.

Arthur, give me thy hand, my brave boy!

ARTHUR.

Take it, i' faith! This is rare news. We shall have noble sport.

GEOFFRY.

We'll make the collar bleed. Rare humming ale!

CLARE.

Aye, aye, all in good time, and plenty of it, too. But now for my orders. In the first place, let all care and anxiety be banish'd from the castle and its neighbourhood. When my own heart is light, no other shall be

heavy if I can help it. So let a general holiday be proclaimed.

GEOFFRY.

Ah bless your worship's honour! Let Geoffry alone for that.

CLARE.

Let all comers have free welcome.

ARTHUR.

I warrant me. That's my look out as porter.

CLARE.

And d'you hear, Geoffry. You must away to the town, and order in a fresh supply. Let there be plenty of every thing.

GEOFFRY.

I'll be off directly.

CLARE.

Hark ye, Arthur, we'll have the minstrels.

ARTHUR.

There's not one within twenty miles of the castle who shall be absent. I know their haunts—Giles Grinder, Simon Squeak, and the rest of them.—Odds my life! we'll foot it merrily.

CLARE.

Well, set about it. Away, away! [Exit.]

SCENE II.

Court Yard of the Castle.

Enter Father Ambrose.

AMBROSE.

Every thing seems to be in a state of confusion. I can't make out what is going forward. I met Sir Reginald e'en now. "Give you the good day, Sir Knight," cried I. "Good day!" quoth he, "that's as it may prove," and off he bounc'd like an arrow from a cross bow. I met Geoffry our butler, bustling along with a face full of care. "Master Geoffry," quoth I, "what's the news?"—"News enough," quoth he, "beef, mutton, hog's puddings"—and poph! off he bounc'd too.—So, here comes Arthur. Peradventure he may be more reasonable.

Enter Arthur, singing and dancing.

Well met, honest Arthur; thou art merry this morning. I would have a little talk with thee.—Why what is the matter with thee?—Stand still, thou naughty knave, and tell me what hath happen'd.

ARTHUR.

Marry, that I will. Great news, my master, rare news, i'faith!—Have you heard it?

AMBROSE.

Heard what?

ARTHUR.

Why the news.—I could have sworn now that his reverence Father Ambrose, chaplain and almoner of this here castle—

AMBROSE.

But the news—

ARTHUR.

Aye, marry, the news.—Now what does your reverence think the news is?

AMBROSE.

That would I learn from thee.

ARTHUR.

Why the news is—*(A loud knocking at the gate)*—Od's my life! that's a knock of authority.—The news is—*(Knocking again)*—Nay, if thou art in a hurry I am not—As I was saying, the news is—

AMBROSE.

Fie, Arthur, linger not thus, but open the gate.—

(Knocking again)—Nay, now it passes—

ARTHUR.

So doth not he who knocks. But to pleasure thee, father, I will perform my function.

(He opens the gate.)

Enter Sir Hildebrand.

HILDEBRAND.

How now, thou untaught peasant! Am I, Sir Hildebrand, to wait thy ignoble leisure?

ARTHUR.

What's that? Untaught peasant? Ignoble leisure? Who are you?

HILDEBRAND.

I have the honour to be the representative of the most illustrious lord the Baron Von Poppindorff.

ARTHUR.

What, little Poppindorff, the Jew broker, who bought young Scatterall's ruin'd castle at t'other end of the forest?—I'll tell thee what, Hildebrand—

HILDEBRAND.

What means the boor?

ARTHUR.

Boor in thy teeth, if thou com'st to that—

AMBROSE.

Nay, I pray thee, Arthur, restrain thyself. Be pleas'd, sir, to acquaint me with thy purpose.

HILDEBRAND.

I come to announce the Baron's immediate approach. His lordship would confer with the Earl of Clare.—(*A bugle without.*)—As I live he is arriv'd, and no preparation, no one in the way to receive his lordship, not a

soul, as I hope to be sav'd.—(*To Arthur*).—Wilt thou stir? Wilt thou announce his lordship's approach?

ARTHUR.

Not I. Announce it thyself, Hildebrand. This is my station.

HILDEBRAND.

I will report thy contumacy to my lord the baron.

ARTHUR.

A fig for the baron!

AMBROSE.

Give over, I pray. I will myself give the proper directions. [*Exit.*]

Enter Baron Von Poppindorff and three Servants.

BARON.

What is all dish? Nopoty in the way? Where is Sir Hildeprant?

HILDEBRAND (*bowing*).

Here, my good lord.

BARON.

Here, my goot lort!—For why you think I keep a you for, that there is not nopoty to receive a me?

HILDEBRAND.

My very good lord, blame not me. The fault was not mine. —But this ill-manner'd porter—

ARTHUR.

Nay, the fault was all his own.

HILDEBRAND.

Believe him, not, most gracious lord. He is a foul-mouth'd varlet. Nay, he revil'd your noble lordship with his filthy phrases. "A fig for the baron," said he—

BARON.

A fig for the baron! And pray what was you do, when he say a fig for the baron?

HILDEBRAND.

I—I—my lord, I was about to chastize him.

ARTHUR.

'Tis well for thee thou wert only about it. By this staff of office—

Enter Father Ambrose.

AMBROSE.

What is towards now? Arthur, what means this?

ARTHUR.

Nay, an I know.

AMBROSE.

Put down thy staff, and keep the peace.—My lord, the Earl is at present occupied, and may not be interrupted; but, 'till he shall be at leisure, I request your lordship to enter and repose yourself.

BARON.

I am varra mush ill-treated, sir—a baron of Yarmany!

AMBROSE.

I pray you, my lord, be appeas'd.

BARON.

No, sir, I will not be appeas'd. I will teach a you
 all—A baron of Yarmany indeed!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

A Forest.

Enter Sir Albert and Maurice, as Pilgrims.

MAURICE.

Stay, good Sir Albert—have a little compassion on
 your faithful servant, who has follow'd you so long over
 these rough cross roads, that the sight of a shady grove,
 where he may rest his weary limbs, and hold a little
 private consultation with the contents of his knapsack, is
 a temptation there is no resisting.

ALBERT.

Courage, good Maurice.

MAURICE.

Why, as for courage, neither I nor any of my gene-
 ration ever wanted their proper share of it. But the
 odds we have to deal with now give themselves mighty
 little concern, about either big looks or hard blows.

Hunger and weariness are enemies, which in the long
 run will come off victorious. For my part, I'll dispute
 the matter no longer with them.—Here's as pretty a bank
 to repose upon—
 (*Sits down and takes out a bottle.*)

ALBERT.

For shame! Relax now, when we are almost arriv'd at our journey's end? Don't you see Clare Castle just before you, and don't you know what treasures it contains?

MAURICE.

Perfectly; and I know too what treasures this contains. Won't you taste it, sir?

ALBERT.

Not if it were nectar! I have no appetite, no sense for any thing, but for the joys which my fond imagination pictures. Ah! if you felt like me the mix'd sensations of transport and anxiety, which fill my bosom when I review those well known walls after an absence of three years—

MAURICE (rising):

Three years! On my word, 'tis a long interval, during which a number of curious things may have occur'd. Not that I would insinuate ought against the lady Ethelinde—

ALBERT:

Breathe not a sound which may impeach her faith!—

MAURICE:

Heaven defend me from such profanation!—And yet, when I think of three years—But hold—Who comes here?—I should know the—As I live, sir, old Geoffry, the drunken butler from the castle. Let's stop him, sir, and make some enquiries before we proceed.—Odso!

you have forgot your whiskers.—So—now you are pretty well transmogrified.—He seems in a mighty hurry—

Enter Geoffry.

GEORFFY.

Plague on it! this service is fatiguing; and then there's such a number of things to remember.—(*Takes out his tablets*)—Let me see—aye—the butcher—hum—the baker—aye—grocer, gamekeeper, cook—Egad! he's at work already, with his whole army of scullions, pell-mell, slashing away, spits, pans, pots—But I must get on.—'Twill be noon presently—Heyday! whom have we here? Pilgrims?

MAURICE.

Kind sir, we are bound to our lady of Walsingham, to return thanks for our safe arrival from the Holy Land. But we are strangers, sir, and have lost our way in the forest. Pray what castle may that be?

GEORFFY.

What, not know Clare Castle! You must be strangers indeed. But you are come in good time—There's rare work going on there now—plenty of good eating and drinking. You shall have your share. All comers are welcome.

MAURICE.

May we presume to ask, kind sir, what has occasion'd all this festivity?

GEORFFY.

GEOFFRY.

You may. None can tell you so well as I. Do you know me?

MAURICE.

Alas! sir, we are strangers.

GEOFFRY.

Not know me! That's good i'faith!—Well to see now—Not know old Geoffry, the butler of Clare Castle, and now appointed steward of the feast, that's to be held in honour of the lady Ethelinde's wedding!

ALBERT (aside).

Confusion! Ethelinde's wedding!

MAURICE (to Albert).

Be patient—(to Geoffry)—the lady *who*, sir, was you pleas'd to say?

GEOFFRY.

The Lady Ethelinde, only daughter and sole heiress of the Earl of Clare. To-morrow's her wedding day, i'faith! There's monstrous preparation making—all the country invited—fat oxen kill'd—sheep, pigs, hams, ducks, capons, pullets—minstrels, morrice dancers, mummers, strummers—nobody idle—all at work—men and boys—woman and maids—But I'm in a vast hurry—I must away to the town, to buy stores and all manner of provisions—sugar, salt, spices, pepper, ginger, nutmeg, cinnamon and cloves, oranges and lemons, quince

marmalade and currant jelly. I've not a moment to lose—
—I must be back again incontinently—nothing can go on
without me. By your leave, gentlemen—you'll be hearti-
tily welcome at the castle.

ALBERT.

One moment, sir. To whom is the Lady Ethelinde to
be married?

GEOFFRY.

Oh! I'll tell you. To Sir Reginald de Clifford. He
lives just by—a mighty convenient distance—a mere step—
—But I must be gone, gentlemen.

ALBERT.

And have they long been attach'd?

GEOFFRY.

Why, as to the matter of that—it's not a bad story—
poor dear lady!—My lord, they say, suspected some
time ago that she had a secret kindness for the knight—
likely enough too, for, to say the truth, he's a portly
gentleman—so what d'you think he does?—Egad, sir!
when she least expected it, he popp'd the question upon
her, and out it all came.

ALBERT.

All what?

GEOFFRY.

Why, all about her love. A full confession, faith!
And so my lord, bless his heart for a good worthy noble

man as he is!—sends this morning for Sir Reginald, and makes him a fair offer of her hand. A great match, you know—fine girl—vast fortune—

ALBERT.

Avow her love! Prodigious!

GEOFFRY.

Yes, mighty prodigious—never any thing known like it—pining and moaning, whim'ring and whining—but they say she's merry enough now—nothing like a young husband—But, out upon it! what am I doing here?

MAURICE.

With your permission, sir—Is there no other young lady at the castle, sir? No pretty young lady?

GEOFFRY.

Why how should you guess that now? I warrant me you mean madam Matilda.

MAURICE.

Is that the young lady's name?

GEOFFRY.

It's a pretty one, isn't it?—Ah! the lord help you! she's a good one.

MAURICE.

How, sir?

GEOFFRY.

Why, now, if you were but to know her—though she's a good girl enough too, if you can get fairly about her.

But then you must let her have her own way, or else she's the very devil incarnate.

MAURICE. — Yes — but —

I suppose, sir, you are well acquainted with her.

GEOFFRY. —

You may say that—leave me alone for the girls—Know her, quotha! There's never a crook nor a turn about her, that I don't know as well as my way to the cellar.

MAURICE. —

I suppose, sir, she's in no want of admirers and sweet-hearts.

GEOFFRY. —

Sweethearts! That you may say—Ah bless your heart! I could if I'd a mind—but hush! It's not fair to blab—though I could tell you something—

MAURICE. —

So she's not hard hearted?

GEOFFRY. —

Ah ha! You want to get it out of me, do you?—Hard hearted! That's as it may happen.—There's one, I believe, she likes—

MAURICE. —

Some smart, lively fellow, hey? Such, for instance, as a gentleman of your appearance and qualifications.

GEOFFRY. —

I? He! he! he! you comical toad you! You have

guess'd it, have you?—Why, to say the truth, she does come to a little, her ice does melt—a cup of canary sometimes, when I catch her alone in the buttery—a little bussing and touzling and squeaking—I could tell you such secrets—she's a dear loving soul, that's the truth on't—But I must be gone—The goodness of the day be with you, gentlemen. *[Exit.]*

MAURICE.

Here's a discovery!—Well, sir, you perceive what three years have brought about.

ALBERT.

Away, Maurice! let us instantly to the castle. She shall not carry it in this triumphant way.—Oh false, inconstant Ethelinde! Oh sad reverse of my long cherished hope!

MAURICE.

A pretty sort of conduct to be sure—What! with such a wither'd old sinner as that!—Odd's my life! I could have forgiven her if she had shewn a better taste!

[Exit.]

SCENE IV.

An Apartment in Clare Castle.

Enter the Earl of Clare, and a Servant.

CLARE.

Who is it you say wants to speak with me?

SERVANT.

One as calls himself Baron Poppindorff. He lives hard by.

CLARE.

Shew him in. (*Exit Servant.*) I have heard of this Poppindorff. A Jew broker, who calls himself a baron. What can the fellow want with me?

Enter Baron von Poppindorff.

BARON.

Mine varra goot lort, the Baron Von Poppindorff has the honour to pay his respect to your goot lortship.

CLARE.

I am the baron's humble servant. Pray what are your commands with me?

BARON.

I have no command, my goot lort; but, as I have made little porchase in the forest, I have thought it my duty to make a my compliment to your goot lortship.—You have varra fine place here, on my wort—fine house, fine furniture, fine every thing—it must have cost mosh varra great deal of monesh.

CLARE.

I suppose so.

BARON.

You suppose so? What! you not know what it cost?

You keep a no account how you spend your monesh?
That be varra foolish.

CLARE.

Mighty civil of you to say so. You are very regular
in your own accounts, I presume.

BARON.

To be sure. I keep a big book, where they all are
put down so prettily—all the items and the sum totalsh.
Ah! it would do your heart goot to see how grant they
look.

CLARE.

So, you have made some money, have you?

BARON.

Pick'd up some little traifle, some small matter of two
three hundred thousand marks. Ah these wars, these
crusades to the Holy Lant! On my wort, that Saladin
has been the best friend I have. The Christians, go
fight with him for Cherusalem, and the Chews they
pocket their monesh. I often make my little joke, and
say, Your varra humble servant, Mister Saladin, you
make a me varra rich mans.

CLARE.

You seem to have a strong sense of the obligation;
but I don't perceive how I have any concern in it.

BARON

Ah! my goot lort, I ask your pardons. I will tell a

you with your goot leave. I have just purchase one house, castle what you call, t'other side of the forest, where I mean to live and enjoy myself and my little monesh. I have try; but I find it so lonesome to be always by myself, the day pass so slow, so tedious, and the nights so disagreeable.

CLARE.

You don't find your solitary reflections very amusing then? You discover that something besides money is wanting?

BARON.

I beg pardons—Monesh is varra goot, varra pleasant to look at, to count over; but then one want some variety. So I have think it might be better to have some society, somebody to talk to when the weather is bad.

CLARE.

Your plan then, I presume, is to marry.

BARON.

The varra thing, my goot lort, I was go to say. To get a pretty little wife, so kint, so goot humour—I was think, my goot lort, that as you have one dochter, who they tell a me is varra pretty womans—

CLARE.

The deuce they did!

BARON.

We might make a the match.

CLARE.

I'm prodigiously oblig'd to you—

BARON.

I knew you'd say so. They was tell a me you was a varra sensible old gentlemen.

CLARE.

And so you shall find me, I can tell you.

BARON.

I make no doubt. I am varra glad I have made acquaintance with you. I like your looks.

CLARE.

I wish I could return the compliment.

BARON.

You are in goot luck I can tell a you. I will settle handsomely on my wife; and no doubt you will settle this castle and all your estates and monesh—

CLARE.

Aye, to be sure—

BARON.

I was think so—upon me and the heirs of my body. Ah! how glad you will be to see one, two, three pretty little childers running about and calling you grantpapa. The little Isaacs, and the little Solomons—

CLARE.

The little imps of the devil!

A COMEDY.

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BARON.

Imps of the teifel! What way is that of talking of your own grantchilders? Oh fie, fie! I thought you had more sense than to talk so of your pretty little grantchilders.

CLARE.

My grand children!

BARON.

To be sure—must not your own dochter's childers be your grantchilders?

CLARE.

And so you have the modesty to propose yourself, in good earnest, as a husband for my daughter?

BARON.

Yaw, mynheer.

CLARE.

My daughter is dispos'd of.

BARON.

What you say dispos'd of?

CLARE.

Aye, and will be married to-morrow to Sir Reginald de Clifford.

BARON.

Has he the monesh?

CLARE.

Enough to answer my purpose.—Good morrow.

[Exit.]

BARON.

Stay, stay—What for you go away and leave a me all alone?—Scorn a me and my monesh! Scorn a the Baron Von Poppindorff!—I will be revenge—I will teach a you—Where is Sir Hildeprant? Where are mine squires?

[*Exit.*

SCENE V.

The Court of the Castle.

Enter Arthur and Peasants.

ARTHUR.

Stand aside—What are you all crowding here for?—
You, sir, get out of the way—

Enter Albert and Maurice.

Hey! whom have we here? Who are you?

MAURICE.

Save you, good sir. May two wayfaring pilgrims, newly return'd from the Holy Land, partake of the hospitality of this noble castle? We would not be troublesome, sir.

ARTHUR.

Then you would be other than you are, sir. We have trouble enough already I think, without the like of you, so you may be off—

Enter Geoffry.

GEOFFRY.

Clear the way there for the steward of the feast!—

Heyday! What's toward now?—Arthur and my two worthy pilgrims?

ARTHUR.

Stand aside, master Geoffry—let me discharge the castle of these vagabonds.

GEOFFRY.

Not so, good Arthur. These pilgrims are other than thou tak'st them for. They are my friends. I met them in the forest e'en now, and bad them to the feast.—How are ye, my hearty fellows?

ARTHUR.

An it be so, they may stay and welcome.

GEOFFRY.

So, you are all here—William, my boy—Cicely, my girl—Kate—Peter—Humphrey—Welcome all.—But, bless my heart! we are losing time—There's the deuce and all to do—brewing, baking, roasting, boiling—sweeping the rooms—brushing away cobwebs—Off my boys—get along, wenches—the buttery's open—rare humming stuff—Be sure you drink the bride's health.—
[*Exeunt peasants.*—You're heartily welcome, my noble pilgrims! Come along, Arthur!

[*Exeunt Geoffry and Arthur.*

ALBERT.

All is confirm'd then! She is false and I am miserable.

MAURICE.
False enough! But bear up, sir. You see I am not so overcome.—But what's that?—Two women! if my eyes don't deceive me—

ALBERT.

'Tis the perfidious fair herself—
MAURICE.
And Matilda with her, by all that's changeable!—If the villain be not laughing!—I'll make you laugh to some purpose before we part, I will!

ALBERT.

How lovely she looks! Can falsehood reside with such perfection?—I'll speak to her, Maurice—
MAURICE.
You are too much agitated at present. Try to recover yourself a little. Step aside for a moment.

Enter Ethelinde and Matilda.

ETHELINDE.

Say no more, Matilda. My embarrassment is beyond all bearing. Surely there never was any thing so cruel and perplexing as my situation!

MATILDA.

I protest, madam, for my part, I don't see any thing so very distressing in this business. I know a good many young ladies, who would settle it very easily.—Bless me,

ma'am, look there—*(Albert and Maurice advance)*—Pilgrims, I declare; and by their crosses and escalops must come from the Holy Land. Perhaps they may be able to give us some intelligence. Speak to them, ma'am.

ETHELINDE.

Pray, sir, as you seem to have come from the Holy Land, may I venture to ask—did you know—that is, did you ever chance to meet—a young cavalier—a handsome young gentleman—

ALBERT.

Madam!

ETHELINDE.

I ask your pardon, sir, but I wish—I have a particular—a very particular reason, which I cannot just now explain, for wishing to know whether you ever was acquainted—

ALBERT.

With whom, madam?

ETHELINDE.

The young gentleman, sir, I spoke of.

ALBERT.

You spoke of no one, madam.

MATILDA.

Dear ma'am, how sadly you set about this business! Let me cross examine him a little. I'll engage for't I'll make him speak.

MAURICE.

That's as you may give him opportunity, madam. Now, if I guess right, you'll find so much to say yourself—

MATILDA.

Indeed, Mr. Sauce-box ! Why then I'll begin with you. Come now, tell me—Do you come from the Holy Land ?—Did you know one Sir Albert de Mortimer there ? Can you tell me if he is alive or dead ? Can you—

MAURICE.

Which of your questions, madam, do you choose I should answer first ? Or would you prefer my answering them all together ?

MATILDA.

Don't be provoking now, but tell me.

MAURICE.

Why yes, ma'am, I do confess as far as relates to the Holy Land—

MATILDA.

Well—and Sir Albert—

MAURICE.

And as for Sir Albert, madam—there might be such a person—

MATILDA.

Might be ?

MAURICE.

That is, madam, there was. By the same token, he had a very agreeable, accomplish'd young man with him as his esquire, one Maurice, madam.

MATILDA.

Did you know him? Do, dear pilgrim, tell me every thing about him. Is he alive or dead? What's become of him? Where is he?

MAURICE.

That's more, I fancy, than he knows himself. Do you know him, ma'am?

MATILDA.

Psha! no—that is, yes, a little—and what of that?—Well—and so—this Maurice—

MAURICE.

Have you any particular reason—

MATILDA.

To be sure I have. But what's that to you? Do tell me what you know about Sir Albert and Maurice.

MAURICE.

If you know them, madam, perhaps you may be able to direct us to one Father Ambrose. We have a commission—

ETHELINDE.

From whom?

MATILDA.

And about what?

MAURICE.

That's a secret. For, said he, take heed, said he—

ETHELINDE.

Who said so?

MAURICE.

Sir Albert, madam; and said Maurice—

MATILDA.

Was that a secret too?

MAURICE.

Inviolable—for, said he, take heed, or Matilda—

MATILDA.

What! Did he speak of me?

MAURICE.

Of you, madam? Then, perhaps, that lady is the lady Ethelinde?

MATILDA.

How should you know any thing about her?

MAURICE.

Lord, madam! the whole country rings of her ladyship.—Pray, madam, is it true that her ladyship is to be married to-morrow?

ALBERT.

Aye, madam, is it true?—And yet you talk'd of an interest—

ETHELINDE.

I did so indeed. I have a very strong interest, sir. To say the truth, some events have occur'd—matters have recently taken so unexpected a turn, that—

ALBERT.

Then, madam, I am to conclude that the report of your intended marriage is true—

Enter the Earl of Clare and Reginald.

CLARE.

Ha! Ethy! Overtaken you at last—what! chatting here with these pilgrims? Fine likely fellows—(to Albert and Maurice)—Well, you are come in good time—you'll meet with plenty of every thing.—Sir Reginald, why don't you do your duty? Let your bride stay for you!

REGINALD.

I am here, my lord, obedient to her commands. The highest honour I can enjoy is to receive them.

CLARE.

Well said, Eh, Ethy! not a word in reply?—Never mind—you'll get rid of that shyness by and by, I warrant me. But come along—if we stand talking here we shall be too late—the mass is just beginning, and the father prior will take it mightily amiss if we interrupt him at his devotions.

Exeunt Clare, Reginald, Ethelinde, and Matilda.

ALBERT.

By heaven ! this is not to be borne. What ! in my presence to go off hand in hand with him !—Let us hence, Maurice, never to behold her more.

MAURICE.

One moment's delay, if you please ; for here comes a personage, who, probably, may have it in his power to give us some useful directions.

Enter Father Ambrose.

AMBROSE.

I am lost in astonishment. She marry ! I know not how to believe it—and yet there's no getting over the evidence.

ALBERT.

Reverend sir—

AMBROSE.

I am not at leisure.

ALBERT.

I beseech you, reverend sir, if it be but for a moment, We would communicate with one Father Ambrose.

AMBROSE.

That is my name. What would'st thou ? I know thee not.

ALBERT.

No one in these parts does know me, sir. If, sir, you

are Father Ambrose, I would ask whether you know Sir Albert de Mortimer.

AMBROSE.

What of him? He was my dear and valued friend. Know'st thou aught of him?

ALBERT.

I knew him well, sir. We were together in Palestine. He charg'd me to impart to you—But are we private, sir?

AMBROSE.

Fear not; no one will interrupt us. Well—proceed.

ALBERT.

He wish'd me, sir, to pray you would vigilantly watch over his interests—that the Lady Ethelinde—

AMBROSE.

Alas! deceiv'd, unhappy man!

ALBERT.

How, sir?—Deceiv'd?

AMBROSE.

Aye, deceiv'd. Her marriage with another is announc'd, and to-morrow—

ALBERT.

To-morrow! No. Thank heaven! I am come in time—

AMBROSE.

Thou!

ALBERT.

Yes, my honest, faithful friend!—Behold in me that wretched Albert—

MAURICE.

And Maurice too, sir, at your service.

AMBROSE.

I rejoice to see thee. It is well thou art come. I was almost at my wit's end.

ALBERT.

I fear I am come but too soon. To see every hope blighted, every fancied joy annihilated—

AMBROSE.

Why truly the case is somewhat novel and embarrassing.

ALBERT.

'Tis horror—distraction!

AMBROSE.

And it requireth calm consideration.

ALBERT.

Talk of calmness to a man, whom disgrace and misery threaten to o'erwhelm! Is she not to be married to-morrow?

AMBROSE.

That's true indeed. What can be done? Not a step can be taken, without disclosing your secret marriage,

and then, heaven bless us! we shall have a pretty piece of work.

MAURICE.

Please your reverence, of two evils that 'will be the least. And yet I know not—We certainly are two very unfortunate personages. I have pick'd up a curious account of my rib too.

AMBROSE.

Of madam Matilda?

MAURICE.

Of madam Matilda. She's agog too.

AMBROSE.

I protest I know not. It may be so. Madam Matilda, to be sure, is of a lively temperament, of a sanguine constitution, which ordinarily is indicative of amorous propensities.

MAURICE.

Od'slife! I could almost have pass'd it over, if she had given me a better substitute—but such a miserable whipper-snapper—

ALBERT.

No more—Tell me, good Ambrose—What would you advise?

AMBROSE.

It is a weighty matter, and, as I said, requires mature consideration. I will reflect upon it.

ALBERT.

You talk as if there were time for deliberation, when every moment calls for decision.

AMBROSE.

Nay, nay, there is time enough. We have the evening before us. Stay—aye, that will be best—Remember'st thou my chamber? There—on that side of the gateway—Come thither after sunset, when we will discuss the matter further. By that time, the festivity in the castle will be at its height, and thou may'st enter unobserv'd.

ALBERT.

But where can I pass the tedious interval, before I may venture to your chamber?

AMBROSE.

Let me consider—Thou canst not have forgotten the hermitage in the forest. Thither repair 'till sunset. Yet hold—on further reflection, let Maurice remain here, that, should any thing material occur, he may advertize thee.

ALBERT.

For a time then farewell! My fate and happiness are in your hands.

[Exeunt severally.]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

The Forest. A Hermitage in the distance.

Enter Baron Von Poppindorff, Sir Hildebrand, and Servants.

BARON.

HOLD a your foolish tongue, Sir Hildeprant, and your bibble babble about patience. I tell a you I will be revenge.—To be refus'd for a knight, a poor paltry—

HILDEBRAND.

Mushroom!

BARON.

What a you say?—A presumptuous, contemptible—

HILDEBRAND.

Braggadocio!

BARON.

What teifil's breeding is that to interrupt me at every wort? What you mean to make echo of me?

HILDEBRAND.

I humbly beg your lordship's pardon; but, when I

found you profess'd yourself to be in a passion, I thought it my duty to be in a passion too.

BARON.

To be sure:

HILDEBRAND.

A pretty pass indeed the world is come to, for my lord the baron to be treated at this rate!

BARON.

Aye, aye, 'tis varra goot—But never mind—I will be revenge, Sir Hildeprant—I will do soch thing as shall make a him repent his insolence. What you think I shall do?

HILDEBRAND.

If I were your lordship—

BARON.

Let a me alone—I have the thought. I will—I will—What would you do now, if you was in my place?—Something varra terrible, varra dreadful—

HILDEBRAND.

By Saint Anthony! I'd carry off his daughter—

BARON.

Goot!

HILDEBRAND.

Marry her—

BARON.

Goot! goot! The varra thing I was think of myself.

We'll do it to-night!—But stop.—There is the servants—

HILDEBRAND.

No danger there. The cellars were all open before we left the castle, and they'll have had their dose before night, I warrant them.

BARON.

Then I fear them nicht. We'll do their business.

HILDEBRAND.

The only question seems to be, who is to do it?

BARON.

Who? Why you, and mine other peoples.—What for you shake a your head?

HILDEBRAND.

Marry, my lord, it would not be amiss if there were more of us. Make the most of us, we are but five.

BARON.

But five?

HILDEBRAND.

We may easily enough be counted; and, for some of them, if your lordship could infuse into them a small portion of your own valour, it would not be the worse for them.

BARON.

I was no think of that.—What can be done?

HILDEBRAND.

Suppose, my lord, we were to beat up for recruits }
A few stout fellows would remove the difficulty.

BARON.

The varra thing I was just think of myself. But where
can they be found?

HILDEBRAND.

Now the wars in Palestine are over, there are plenty
of vagrant soldiers—sturdy pilgrims—hardy knaves who
have smelt blood—

BARON.

Hardy knaves who have smelt blood!—Goot—But
where can they be found?

HILDEBRAND.

Why here's a fellow approaching—

BARON.

Where?

HILDEBRAND.

There—Don't you see him among the trees? A kind
of pilgrim looking fellow. Shall I try to engage him?

BARON.

Yaw.

HILDEBRAND.

He will probably expect something by way of earnest.
I must trouble your lordship to unloosen the strings of

your purse, and furnish me with a small matter. As I am a true man, I have not a single sous.

BARON.

Unloose my porse! Give my monesh! What you think I do with my monesh, to give it away?—Tell a him the Baron Von Poppindorff be varra generous, and will reward a him. Give my monesh indeed! A pretty joke!
[Exit Baron with servants.]

HILDEBRAND.

May Pharaoh and all his ten plagues go with thee, thou mean-spirited stingy curmudgeon! To have seen better days, and to be reduc'd to serve this rascally Jew money-changer!—Had I but a good name, whereby to get into another service, I'd starve with him no longer. But my necessities compel my abasement. Now for the scurvy commission wherewithal I am charg'd. By the mass! the pilgrim is a likely knave—

Enter Sir Albert.

I give thee the good day, pilgrim.

ALBERT.

The good day to you, sir.

HILDEBRAND.

May I inquire what brings thee hither?

ALBERT (*aside.*)

A good familiar question—(*to him*)—I purpose, sir, to visit yon hermitage. Have you any further commands?

HILDEBRAND.

In faith, thou art a pretty looking fellow, and not like one that dealeth in hermitages. Tut! man, I know thee.

ALBERT (*aside*).

The deuce you do—(*to him*)—You have the advantage of me, sir, in that respect, for I never saw you before in my life—(*aside*)—and I hope I never shall see you again.

HILDEBRAND.

You may be glad you have seen me now. I have taken a liking to you—thou hast a martial demeanour, as though thou hadst seen service—Ah! there's a kind of expression, as it were of valour, which cannot escape a soldier's eye.

ALBERT.

Are you a soldier, sir?

HILDEBRAND.

Canst thou behold me, and ask!

ALBERT.

Why really, sir—but, however, since you are pleas'd to say it, it may be so.

HILDEBRAND.

Come now—confess—Am I not right?

ALBERT.

Yes, sir, I have serv'd.

HILDEBRAND.

I could have sworn it. I rejoice to hear it. I love a soldier at my heart. And after all thou art poor! 'Tis pity! What if I were to put thee in a way to redress the wrongs of fortune?

ALBERT.

You are somewhat rapid in your advances, sir—

HILDEBRAND.

I will prefer thee to the service of a noble, a generous friend of mine. Thou must undoubtedly have heard of his excellency the Baron Von Poppindorf—

ALBERT.

Never in the whole course of my life.

HILDEBRAND.

A nobleman of acknowledg'd courtesy, valour, and liberality.—Shall I intrust thee with a secret?

ALBERT.

I have no curiosity to know what does not concern me.

HILDEBRAND.

Thou shalt find that thou hast a concern. My noble friend, who dwelleth close at hand, hath a controversy with a neighbouring lord.

ALBERT.

May I inquire who his adversary is?

HILDEBRAND.

They call him Clare.

ALBERT (*aside*).

This may be worth hearing—(*to him*) Clare?—Pray, sir, what may be your friend's cause of quarrel?

HILDEBRAND.

Why, sir, this Clare—d'you mark me—hath refus'd to give my illustrious friend his daughter—

ALBERT,

To give her as what?

HILDEBRAND.

Marry, sir, as his bride. Now, sir, my noble friend, unable to stomach so gross an affront, hath meditated a revenge commensurate with the provocation.

ALBERT.

Of what nature?

HILDEBRAND.

Thou shalt be instructed. He is purpos'd this night to assail the Earl's castle, and bear away his daughter. If thou wilt engage in the enterprize under my guidance, my noble friend, the epitome of honour and generosity, will reward thee beyond thy hopes.

ALBERT (*aside*).

What an infernal project!

HILDEBRAND.

Is it not a glorious plan?—Come, my brave fellow—what dost thou ruminat upon?

ALBERT.

considering—Is it quite certain that the Baron
o carry his project into execution to-night ?

HILDEBRAND.

ively so.

ALBERT.

, sir, I have reflected on your offer, and think I
well make one of your party.

HILDEBRAND.

e spoke all the nine worthies at once !—What !
thou hadst it in thee—come—I will introduce
the Baron.

ALBERT.

n good time, sir ; but I pray you, excuse me for
alf hour or so. I will but perform my vow at the
ge, and will follow you.

HILDEBRAND.

t so.—That is the road to the Baron's castle.
thou arrivest there, ask for Sir Hildebrand.

[*Exit.*

ALBERT.

well, noble Sir Hildebrand ! If such be the man,
ust be the master ?—What ought I to do ? Re-
Clare Castle, and give notice of what is going
No—I will first visit the Baron, and ascertain
distinctly this abominable conspiracy against the

peace and honour of my Ethelinde.—My Ethelinde!—she is no longer mine!—But lost to me as she is, though her falsehood has for ever blasted my happiness, I cannot, I will not abandon her. [Exit.]

SCENE II.

An Apartment in Clare Castle.

Enter Ethelinde and Matilda.

MATILDA.

How unlucky it was, ma'am, that my lord came upon us, and interrupted us in our conversation with those pilgrims! I dare say, we should have been able to have pick'd up some intelligence.

ETHELINDE.

It was indeed provoking. They said, you know, they had been charg'd with a commission from my Albert to Father Ambrose—

MATILDA.

To be sure they did.

ETHELINDE.

I wish I knew what it was. Do you think you could find out the pilgrims, and discover what it was they were charg'd with?

MATILDA.

I'll go directly, ma'am, and try.—But see—if Father Ambrose himself be not coming this way—I dare say

he knows it by this time. Leave him to me, ma'am—I know how to come round him.—I'll get it out of him, I warrant.

ETHELINDE.

You seem to have a pretty good opinion of your abilities.

MATILDA.

Lord! ma'am, were you but to see how I manage him—I've a sort of taking way with me, which these old gentlemen can't withstand—

Enter Father Ambrose.

Oh my dear sir! I'm glad you're come—

AMBROSE.

Stand aside, I pray thee—my business is with thy lady.

MATILDA.

Nay, come—you shan't be cross now—do smile and be good humour'd—

AMBROSE.

Art thou in thy right wits?—Away!—I have no time for trifling.

MATILDA.

Why you old, cross, ugly thing—

AMBROSE.

Stand aside, I tell thee again. Trouble me not.—*(To Ethelinde)* What is the meaning of this, daughter? I

thought to have seen thee in tip-top spirits, all alert and merry; but thou seemest melancholy.

ETHELINDE.

Alas! father, can I be otherwise, when my heart is weigh'd down with sorrow?

AMBROSE.

What! when the whole castle and the country for ten miles round are running mad with joy, because thou art to be married to-morrow? Oh daughter, daughter! could I have expected this from thee?

ETHELINDE.

Reproach me not, good father: though I may well reproach my own weakness—

AMBROSE.

There now—with what ingenuity can some people gloss over their own faults!—Weakness, call *you* it? Give it its proper name—Don't mince the matter.

ETHELINDE.

I will not cavil with you about words. Call it whatever you please; but indeed I am not guilty of what you suppose. My faith and constancy are unimpeach'd—Never for a moment have I been false to my Albert.

AMBROSE.

Not false to thine Albert? How can'st thou then to accept of Sir Reginald?

ETHELINDE.

cept him! Sooner would I quit this paternal roof,
counter the rude buffetings of an unfeeling world,
alsify my vow to the husband of my heart.

AMBROSE.

erefore then suffer these preparations to go on?

ETHELINDE.

ve tried to prevail on my father—but my appre-
ns of a premature discovery—and you know his

AMBROSE.

ho! now I begin to understand.—Well, I am glad
l matters are not so bad as I expected. Come, be
d cheer; I have receiv'd some intelligence.

MATILDA.

at! you have seen the two pilgrims then? Do
ell us what they say, that's a good creature.

AMBROSE.

vas a secret.

MATILDA.

w can you be so provoking!—When my lady is so
us, and I should be so glad to know—

AMBROSE.

st thou be always prying into every thing? I would
thee conquer that evil propensity.

MATILDA.

I'm sure you're always snubbing me—

ETHELINDE.

I would not offend you, father, by appearing too inquisitive; but, if there is nothing improper in my asking—

AMBROSE.

Nothing in the world can be more natural. The communication, as I told thee, was, and for the present must remain, a secret. But this much I may venture to say—Sir Albert lives.

ETHELINDE.

Heav'n's blessing on the news!

MATILDA.

And Maurice—Do tell me what they said of him.

AMBROSE.

For this once I will satisfy thee. He lives too.

MATILDA.

Oh you dear delightful man!

ETHELINDE.

But, father, if I may believe your looks, you could tell me something more. Consider how anxious I must be—

AMBROSE.

Well, perhaps, I may be able—these pilgrims—by the way, they are very gentleman-like pilgrims. I have taken a great fancy to them.

ETHELINDE.

I don't care about the pilgrims—

AMBROSE.

No!—That's strange.—Well, well, they give me good hopes that Sir Albert is on his return, and will shortly be here.

ETHELINDE.

Let me then fly to my father, explain every thing, and put an immediate stop to these odious preparations!

AMBROSE.

Softly, daughter—add not to thy former error the new one of precipitation. I must again consult the pilgrims, ere I can decide on what is to be done. I have given thee enough for pleasant contemplation, and for the government of thy conduct.—The blessing of the evening be with thee! [Exit.

ETHELINDE.

Well, Matilda—my Albert will return—my sorrows are over, my cares are forgotten.

MATILDA.

Oh lord! ma'am, I never was so delighted in my life—I shall love a priest as long as I live for the sake of this old gentleman, though he was so crusty.—How glad our poor husbands will be to see us!—When do you think, ma'am, they'll come?

ETHELINDE.

I wish I could tell you.

MATILDA.

Well, ma'am, never mind; we shall have them soon for certain.—No more melancholy now, no more sighing and groaning!—For my part, I could sing and dance—Couldn't you, ma'am?

ETHELINDE.

Yes, my girl—I feel as light as air. Hope once again illumines my heart, and visions of happiness open to my view! [Exeunt.

SCENE III.

The Gate of Baron Von Poppindorff's Castle.

Enter Sir Albert.

ALBERT.

If my direction had not been so plain, I should begin to suspect I had mistaken my way.—But soft—what is this?—A baron's residence?—It seems marvellously out of repair.—All fast too—Let's see whether it contains any inhabitants. (Sounds the Bugle.

Simkin appears within the gate.

SIMKIN.

Who's there?—Stand!

ALBERT.

Pray, sir, is this the residence of the Baron Von Pop-pindorff?

SIMKIN.

And if it be, what then?

ALBERT.

In that case, I would inquire for one Sir Hildebrand.

SIMKIN.

Sir Hildebrand? What dost want with him?

ALBERT.

I would speak with him, sir. 'Tis at his bidding I come.

SIMKIN.

Why then belike thou art the soldier pilgrim he said would come here?

ALBERT.

The very same. Pray advertize him of my arrival.

SIMKIN.

That be more nor I dare do. I munna leave my post. Our baron, plague take him! be a main out of the way cantankerous sort of a chap. But I'll call him, sir.—Our castle be not so large, but he'll hear me fast enough.—Sir Hildebrand! Why, Sir Hildebrand, I say!

Enter Sir Hildebrand within the gate.

HILDEBRAND.

Wherefore all this clamour, master Simkin? Hath any thing untoward happen'd on thy guard?

SIMKIN.

I know not what thou call'st untoward. I've seen nothing of that sort. But yonder's a man—

HILDEBRAND.

What, my man of war!—Open the gate forthwith, Simkin, and let him enter.—Nay hasten—Thou art always so tardy.—

SIMKIN.

I be doing it as fast as I can.—Don't hurry a body so—A plague on this old lock!—There—I've don't.

HILDEBRAND (*advancing*).

Welcome, my bold fellow! I have spoken of thee to my lord the baron: Enter.

ALBERT.

After you, sir.

HILDEBRAND.

I perceive thou hast learned courtesy in the service. Follow me then, my man of war! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

An Apartment in the Baron's Castle.

Enter Sir Hildebrand and Sir Albert.

HILDEBRAND.

This way.—Repose thyself in this chamber for a moment, while I announce thee to my noble friend. There

are, thou seest, accommodations—Thou may'st amuse thyself with surveying the portraits, wherewithal the apartment is decorated. They're his noble lordship's ancestors, all undoubted originals, and strong likenesses.

[Exit.

ALBERT.

His lordship's ancestors!—They certainly must be originals, for they are like nothing that ever was seen before.—But who comes here?—The baron himself, I presume.—He has a mighty Israelitish appearance.

Enter the Baron and Sir Hildebrand.

HILDEBRAND.

This, my good lord, is the person of whom I spoke to you. You see he is a fine likely fellow.

BARON.

Yaw, varra fine, varra likely indeed—Hark a yeo, Sir Hildeprant—*(They whisper)*.

ALBERT *(aside)*.

Why this is the very fellow, who was drumm'd out of our camp at Messina for usury. I remember him perfectly.

BARON.

So, friend—What is your name?

ALBERT.

I understood, sir, it was my sword, and not my name you wanted.

BARON.

'Goot, varra goot; 'tis your swort indeed. Sir Hildeprant was tell a me you have been in the wars. Had you moch fight?

ALBERT.

I had a few opportunities of seeing service.

BARON.

Ah! there was hart work, I dare say. But never mind—Sir Hildeprant was say, he tell a you what we are about.

ALBERT.

He mention'd something of a plan to carry off the Earl of Clare's daughter.

BARON.

'Yaw! I will carry her off, and make her my wife.—Well, friend, what you say? Have you the goot heart?

ALBERT.

You may depend on it, wherever you go I'll not be far behind you.

BARON.

Thank you, friend, varra moch oblige; but I shall expect you to go before a me, I can tell a you.

HILDEBRAND.

Excellent well, my lord. The conceit is good.

BARON.

'Yaw—I think it be varra goot for him to go first, when

I pay him the monesh. What you think I pay him the monesh for, but to go first?—(*To Albert.*)—'Tis your trade, you know. Come, tell a me—When was it you went to the wars?

ALBERT.

I join'd our army at Messina—'twas on the fourth of May—I shall never forget the day—

BARON.

For why you no forget?

ALBERT.

Ha! ha! ha! It was such an excellent thing! 'I was enough to make one die of laughing!

BARON.

What was the joke? I love the joke. I sometimes make a the little joke myself. Come, tell a me your joke.

ALBERT.

You'll like it yaatly. I got to Messina, just as they were drumming a rascally Jew money broker out of the camp.

BARON.

The teiful you did? And pray for what you call that a joke? It was varra bad joke.

ALBERT.

Ha! ha! ha! They laid it on him heartily, and the rascal look'd so dismally, and made such a howling!

'Twas rare sport—Ha! ha! ha!—He must have felt them, you know, pretty smartly.

BARON.

No doubt.—(*Rubbing his back.*)

ALBERT.

Why you don't laugh—

BARON.

I ask your pardons, I do laugh great deal—Ha! ha!—
(*Forces a laugh.*)

ALBERT.

I knew you'd like to hear it, 'tis so droll. He was a precious fellow. They all said flogging was too little for such a blood-sucking rogue. He ought to have been hang'd, they said.

BARON.

They were varra uncivil persons for their pains. But bless a my heart! Sir Hildeprant—run away, and send in my arms and my weapons, The pilgrim shall choose for himself.

ALBERT.

I need them not. Mine own are deposited in the forest; and I have moreover a companion, upon whom I can depend, and whom I doubt not I shall be able to engage for this enterprize, if your lordship should wish to have him.

HILDEBRAND.

Engage him, my lord, by all means.

BARON.

For why you interfere? The varra thing I was just think of myself.—(To *Albert*).—Yaw—engage him by all means.—Where is he?

ALBERT.

I agreed to meet him about sunset at the hermitage.

BARON.

Go—run away—bring him here directly—[*Exit Albert*.]
So—now we shall be goot troop, and need not fear noboty.—Ah ha! mine jackanapes lort! I will teach a you how to scorn me and my monesh! [*Exeunt*.]

SCENE V.

A Hall in Clare Castle.

Geoffry, Arthur, Maurice, and others, discovered sitting at a Table, with Bottles and Glasses.

OMNES.

Hurrah! Here's to my lord again!

GEOFFRY.

Well said, my noble hearts! You're all kindly welcome, and there's plenty for you. So fill again to the health of our young lady.

ARTHUR.

Were the horn a mile deep, I'd see to the bottom of it.
—Here's to her good fortune!

GEOFFRY.

Not forgetting Madam Matilda. Ah! she's a girl of
the right sort.

ARTHUR.

That she is, I'll be sworn; and so you know, master
Geoffry, as well as any one.

GEOFFRY.

I?—What should I know?

ARTHUR.

Ah you sly rogue! We understand you.—Dost not
think we know thee of old?—That buttery of thine,
could it but speak, I warrant me could tell us a confidant
secret or two—

GEOFFRY.

Fie, Arthur—gentlemen never talk of such matters
—When a pretty girl—It's not fair to blab, you know.

ARTHUR.

No more it's not, master Geoffry.—Well, here goes
to madam Matilda. Why how now, pilgrim! Not fill
thy glass?—What makes thee so dull, man, o'th'sudden?

MAURICE.

I dull?—Not I—I protest I never was so merry in my
life—Ha! ha! ha! What you say is so droll!—Here
goes to madam Matilda—Come, master Geoffry, confess
—Tell us a little more how you and madam Matilda go
on.

GEOFFRY.

Not I—I'm too much a man of honour for that. If a fine girl, you know, takes a fancy to one, mum's the word—Why now what brings that Father Ambrose here, to interrupt us just at the height of our mirth?

Enter Father Ambrose.

AMBROSE.

So, my good friends! All got together merry and happy? I'm glad on't. I like to see cheerful faces.

GEOFFRY.

That's more than some of your cloth do, with your penances and fast-days. But mayhap you look forward to confession time. You'll bring us up then.

AMBROSE.

When that time comes, master Geoffry, it will be soon enough to talk about it. I'm not in my function now; so go on with your merriment, and give me a glass of your liquor.—That's well—Fill it up—Here's to your young lady's health!

GEOFFRY.

Well swigg'd, i'faith!—I didn't know thou had'st this in thee.—Come, my lads, his reverence sets us a good example.—Fill up your glasses, and do him reason.

AMBROSE (to Maurice).

Hist! A word—I have convers'd with the lady Ethelinde—all's right in that quarter—she is faithful—

MAURICE.

And Matilda—

AMBROSE.

Nay, I know nought of her—But hark!—Sir Albert is here—he hath made discovery of a plot—

MAURICE.

Of what nature?

AMBROSE.

Hush! We cannot discourse of it here.—He requireth thy assistance, and that forthwith. Let us slip away, and I will tell thee more.—Now's the time—Follow me.

[*Exeunt.*]

GEOFFRY.

Are you all ready, my lads? Here we go to his reverence—How now! His reverence off?—And, as I live, carried off the pilgrim too!—If ever I was play'd such a trick since I first tasted liquor—

ARTHUR.

Never trust me, if they ben't gone to find out the girls. Let your friars and pilgrims alone for that.

GEOFFRY.

We'll be after 'em directly—We'll only empty the can. Good old sack must not be slighted. And to add a zest to the liquor, suppose, Arthur, thou giv'st us a song.

ARTHUR.

For good fellowship's sake, and to pleasure thee,

master Geoffry, I will.—Now, charge your glasses, and mind you all strike in with me in the chorus.

SONG.

Let statesmen consume their best days in debate,
About places, and pensions, and mending the state;
For such matters as those I confess I've no knack,
But I think I'm a pretty good judge of old sack.

Chorus.

So drink off your glass
To your favourite lass,
And fill it again in a crack, boys, and fill it again in a crack.

ARTHUR.

Old sack, I affirm, is the liquor of life,
The only protection against care and strife;
No med'cine like this has physician or quack,
For what can give spirits like mellow old sack?

Chorus.

So drink off your glass, &c.

ARTHUR.

Is the day overclouded, too hot or too cold?
Does your mistress turn coy, or your wife prove a scold?
A cure for such evils you never need lack,
When you pledge a good fellow in mellow old sack.

Chorus.

So drink off your glass, &c.

ARTHUR.

They may talk of their diamonds and rubies so bright;
 A bumper of sack is a more tempting sight:
 Then ne'er on a liquor like this turn your back,
 But drink while you're able of mellow old sack.

Chorus.

So drink off your glass, &c.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.

An Apartment in Clare Castle.

Enter Ethelinde and Matilda, meeting.

MATILDA.

Well, ma'am, here we are again, just in the old way.
 Night's come on, and we don't seem a bit nearer the end
 of our business. I can't imagine what father Ambrose
 can mean by his humming and hawing.

ETHELINDE.

I have such entire reliance upon him, that as far as
 the delay affects only myself, I feel no great uneasiness;
 though I confess I am sorry that my father is still
 allowed to persist in an error—

MATILDA.

Lord! ma'am, if that's all, there's no great harm in
 it. He's always taking some strange fancy or other in
 his head—

ETHELINDE.

Eie, fie, Matilda—He is always affectionate, and his intentions are ever kind. I have reproach'd myself too often for having contracted engagements without his participation, to suffer myself to insinuate any thing against him—But hush!—*(A noise at the door)*—Didn't you hear a noise at the door?—There again—

MATILDA.

As sure as can be somebody's at the door. They're trying to break it open—Oh dear ma'am! if I don't tremble from head to foot—Ah!—*(screams)*.

[The door is forced open.

Enter the Baron and Sir Hildebrand.

BARON.

Tell a me which is she—

HILDEBRAND.

That's your prize—I'll secure the other—Now let's off as fast as we can.

BARON.

Ah ha! pretty rogue, you come along with me.—For why you make stroggle—

ETHELINDE.

If you are men—Oh help! help!

MATILDA.

Help! Murder! Fire!

HILDEBRAND.

Plague on your screaming! Come along quietly.

Enter Sir Albert and Maurice, armed, with vizors closed.

ALBERT.

Hands off, villains! Release this lady—lay hold of that fellow—secure him—Here, give me a cord.—

[*They tie their hands.*]

BARON.

What teifel's work is this?—Tie a mine hants?—What you mean by tie a mine hants?

ALBERT.

Be not alarm'd, lady. You are safe. No one shall harm you.

ETHELINDE.

Whoever you are, sir, receive our thanks. Without your timely succour, what would have become of us?

BARON (*to Sir Hildebrand*).

So, you tied too, Sir Hildeprant?

HILDEBRAND.

Aye, fast enough. I suppose the ropes will be shifted to our necks soon. A plague on your project!—If you were to be hang'd alone, I shouldn't care—

BARON.

What you say, hang't?—Oh dear, oh dear a me!—
(*To Albert*).—Pray let a me go—I will give you the monesh—moch, great deal monesh.

MATILDA.

Oh ma'am ! if there are not more people coming along the gallery—

ALBERT.

Fear nothing, ladies—We will protect you.
Enter Lord Clare, Sir Reginald, Ambrose, Geoffry, and Servants.

CLARE.

Here they are, i'faith !—Have at you, villains !

ETHELINDE.

Oh my dear father !

CLARE.

Fear nothing, love !—Down with them, Reginald !

ETHELINDE.

Stay—the villains are secur'd. These gentlemen, heaven reward them for it ! rescued us.

CLARE.

Which are the rogues then ?

ALBERT.

Here they stand, my lord.

CLARE.

Let me see them. Bring them forward, Geoffry.

GEOFFRY.

Come forward, d'ye hear, and shew your ugly faces—
Now the lord preserve us, whom have we here ?

CLARE.

What! the noble Baron Von Poppindorff!—I'm your most humble servant—And my worthy Sir Hildebrand too!—I am really at a loss to shew my proper sense of your kind intentions. Pray what have you to say for yourselves?

BARON.

I have nothing to say at all, but that I wish I was not never come here. It was all Sir Hildebrand's fault—he persuaded a me, when I no think nothing. Hang a him if you please, but let a me go. That hanging is one thing I never could bear, it is so disagreeable.

CLARE.

No, no, sir, you sha'n't get off so easily. We'll teach you how to invade Clare Castle.

GEOFFRY.

If your honour's worship will leave them to us, we'll cool their courage for them. There's the finest cold bath below in the castle moat, a little muddy indeed, and in this warm weather not quite the sweetest. A few plunges there, and a little exercise afterwards in a blanket—

BARON.

Plunges and planket!—What you say?—Duck a baron of Yarmany!

CLARE.

If I were to treat you as you deserve, I should leave

you to Geoffry's discipline. But take them away—confine them with the other prisoners, 'till we can find leisure to-morrow morning to determine what is to be done with them.—Geoffry, see them properly secur'd.

GEOFFRY.

Get on, ye vagabonds!—Troop—march—

BARON.

I do, good master Geoffry—Oh dear, oh dear a me! I was never get into no such scrape in all my life before!

[*Exit the Baron, Sir Hildebrand, Geoffry and Servants.*]

CLARE.

Now we've got rid of them, we may think of other matters. By the by, Ethy, who are these gentlemen to whom we are so much oblig'd?

ETHELINDE.

They are entire strangers to me; but I owe them obligations which I never can repay.

CLARE.

That's true—very great obligations indeed. Gentlemen, I return you my best thanks. Egad! you came just in the nick of time—Hey!—How's that?—What business, by the by, could you have here at all?—Eh, Reginald?

ALBERT.

That, my lord, Father Ambrose can explain.

AMBROSE.

Yes, my lord. Having receiv'd notice of the baron's intentions from two of his associates—these two worthy gentlemen whom you see here—

CLARE.

The deuce they were !

ALBERT.

Not exactly associates, my lord ; merely appriz'd of his plan, and solicited to co-operate in it.

CLARE.

So, so—not associates—only accessaries before the fact.—And have you the assurance—

REGINALD.

Pray, my lord, suffer the gentleman to proceed. I dare say he will give a good account of himself.

AMBROSE.

I can assist him, if it should be necessary.

CLARE.

You seem to know more of them than they do of themselves ; but, if you can, do clear up the matter.

AMBROSE.

That gentleman, having reveal'd to me the baron's plan, departed with his companion to meet the conspirators, not to assist, but to frustrate their wicked project.

CLARE.

So, so, that was the case!—l'faith! ye are noble gentlemen, and I am thankful to you for your opportune services.—By the way, though, I could do it more to the purpose, if I knew whom I was addressing.

ALBERT.

If my services, my lord, have been so fortunate as to merit your approbation—

CLARE.

Sir, they merit more. I long to know you, that I may prove to you my gratitude.

ALBERT.

Then, my lord, I thus disclose myself.

(He raises the vizor of his helmet.)

ETHELINDE *(running to Albert)*.

My Albert! My lov'd, my long lamented lord!

ALBERT.

My lov'd, my constant Ethelinde!

CLARE.

Heyday! What's all this?—My lov'd lord! My lov'd, my constant Ethelinde!—Be so good, sir, as to stand a little farther off.—Is the girl gone mad?

ETHELINDE.

If I am, 'tis with joy.

CLARE.

Come away, I say.—What are you doing there, Sir

Reginald, to let another man run away with your bride!

ALBERT.

The truth of our situation has been too long conceal'd
from your lordship; but it is now time that all mystery
should end. Sanctify'd by my royal master's hands
whose banners I fought in Palestine, I assert a husband's
right to this lady.

CLARE.

Husband! Why what the deuce—Eh, Reginald!

REGINALD.

Your lordship will recollect the fear I express'd
of having been too hasty—

CLARE.

But who could have guess'd—(To Ethelinde)—Say, you
was married all the time, was you?—

ETHELINDE.

Let me implore your forgiveness—

CLARE.

Forgiveness! indeed! To make your father's mistake—
bring him into a scrape with—Egad! Sir Reginald
hardly know what to say to you—This little demure—
You have been detestably ill-treated in this business!

REGINALD.

Say no more, my lords. Now the discovery, which as
you know I always dreaded, is made! I cannot suffer my
own personal feelings to damp the joy which it must give

sion to others. Let me be an advocate with you in that lady's favour—

—An advocate in her favour?—That's very handsomely said of you to be sure!—(To Ethelinde).—Well, and what have you to say for yourself, madam?

ETHELINDE.

I depend entirely on your kindness and good nature.

CLARE.

You do?—Why then to shew you what a judgment you've got, I've a great mind—I could find in my heart—not to be angry with you at all.—There!—(embracing her). I forgive you.—Why don't you introduce me to this gentleman?

ETHELINDE.

Sir Albert de Mortimer, sir—

CLARE.

Sir Albert de Mortimer! the hero who sav'd our gallant monarch's life!—Sir, I am honour'd by your alliance—

ALBERT.

The nobleness of your conduct, my lord—

CLARE.

Say no more about it! Give me your hand, and take her's from mine.—Well, Ethy! hey! and how did you manage to carry on this matter so secretly?

AMBROSE.

There I must come in as a party in your lordship's forgiveness. Overcome by their entreaties, I join'd their hands, and, at the same time, united madam Matilda here to Maurice, Sir Albert's esquire.

MATILDA (*sobbing*).

Y—es, my lord, I co—confess I was married too; but I hadn't my dear lady's luck, my hu—hu—husband isn't come back.

MAURICE (*to Clare*).

With your lordship's leave—(*to Matilda*) Yes, mistress, your hu—hu—husband is come back, and a little sooner, perhaps, than you expected.

(*He raises the vizor of his helmet.*)

MATILDA (*running to him*).

Oh my dear, dear Maurice!

MAURICE.

Hands off—keep your distance—I have heard of your pranks—You know your way to the buttery—Old Geoffrey is a pretty sort of playfellow—

MATILDA.

I! Old Geoffrey indeed! Is the man out of his senses?

MAURICE.

Aye, madam, I know all about it—

Enter Geoffry.

GEOFFRY.

Ha! ha! ha! We've done their business. The whole gang of 'em are as prettily pack'd together—

MATILDA.

So, sir, do you dare to say any thing about me?

MAURICE.

Aye, sir; that you ever had her alone in the buttery?

MATILDA.

That I ever suffer'd any improper familiarities?

MAURICE.

That you ever treated her with a cup of canary? That there was any bussing, and touzling and squeaking?

GEOFFRY.

Sir—madam—I vow and protest—Never was so amaz'd in the whole course of my life—

MATILDA.

Speak out, sirrah!

MAURICE.

Don't mince the matter, friend—the lady wishes you to confess the truth. You was more communicative this morning in the forest.

GEOFFRY.

So!—You was the pilgrim then?—I'm fairly caught, egad!

MATILDA.—Come, sir, don't stand staring, and humming and haw-

Come, sir, don't stand staring, and humming and haw-
ing, but speak out. What did you ever see in me—

GEOFFREY.—Nothing, as I hope to be sav'd. A cyp of canary now

Nothing, as I hope to be sav'd. A cyp of canary now
and then indeed—I confess the canary—

MATILDA.

Well, sirrah!

MAURICE.—Nay, don't browbeat my witness. I'll stand by you.

Nay, don't browbeat my witness. I'll stand by you.
friend, you shall have fair play.—So you confess the canary?
Well, go on.

MATILDA.—Aye, go on. The humming and touzling, sirrah!

Aye, go on. The humming and touzling, sirrah!

GEOFFREY.—Lord help your heart! Why now, I'll be sworn—

Lord help your heart! Why now, I'll be sworn—
sing and touzling quotha? That were a pretty joke
indeed.

MATILDA.—You won't speak out, won't you? Why you poor,

You won't speak out, won't you? Why you poor,
dry, wither'd, sapless twig! You little red-nos'd, pin-
ply fac'd—

MAURICE.

Come, Maurice, let me settle this misunderstanding.

Your Matilda has been my constant companion.

answer for her attachment and fidelity as I can for my
own.

MAURICE.

There is no disputing your ladyship's testimony.—
(To Geoffrey.)—Well, Sir, what have you to say for
yourself?

GEOFFREY.

Why, to be sure, the matter is a little awkward. It
would seem that, somehow or other, I've got on the wrong
side of the post. But there's no harm done. You may
believe what they tell you; and if ever you catch me at
bouncing again, without knowing better whom I have to
deal with, send me to keep company with the baron.

MAURICE (to Matilda).

Well, I am persuaded—What do you stand twisting
your fingers there for?

MATILDA (pouting).

That my conduct should be call'd in question in this
outrageous manner, when I'm sure my lady knows, and
every body knows—

MAURICE.

Psha! I tell you I am satisfied.

MATILDA (pouting).

It's very hard, I'm sure, that I should be accus'd, and
with such anatomy too—

MAURICE.

Be appeas'd, I say. Come—come to my arms, thou spotless dove!—(*Embraces her*).

CLARE.

Why so, that's right. Now, as I take it, all goes as it should. Come, my girl, take your husband's hand. May you be as happy, as the man of your choice can make you! And as for the rest of you, and all our worthy friends, the oftner I see you with smiling faces at Clare Castle the better!

[*Exeunt Omnes.*]

THE END.

RICHES:

OR,

THE WIFE AND BROTHER.**A COMEDY.**

The first of these is the *idea of the good*. It is the idea of the good which is the basis of all moral action. It is the idea of the good which is the basis of all moral action. It is the idea of the good which is the basis of all moral action.

THE CITY MADAM of Massinger, like many other plays of the same period, presents so strange a mixture of good and bad writing, of exalted sentiment and gross obscenity, that it is less surprising it should have been so long banished from the stage, than that its representation should ever have been suffered. Nor is its contexture better than its morals; its plot is extravagant and improbable, its characters are ill supported, and any interest, which might have been created in the course of the drama, is effectually stifled by the absurdity of its catastrophe. To alter or adapt such a comedy for a modern audience was impossible; but to suffer the beauties which it contained to remain concealed in the impure mass which enveloped them, was unjust alike to the fame of Massinger, and to the good taste of our own time. The only way, by which they could be properly brought forward, was that which has now been adopted; by writing a new play, in which might be incorporated those passages of the *City Madam*, which were considered as deserving of preservation.

PROLOGUE.

Written by Sir James Bland Burges.

'MID the wide ruins of imperial Rome,
The cradle once of Genius, now the tomb,
If chance a sculptur'd fragment should disclose,
Some Jove or Phœbus, without arms or nose,
With emulation rival artists strive
It's shape and just proportions to revive;
'Till, when restor'd its symmetry and grace,
With added beauties both of form and face,
In the completed mass the critic sees
The hand of Phideas or Praxiteles.
So, mid our British stores neglected lie
Dramas, which might the touch of time defy,
But that the taint of a licentious age
Forbids them to disgrace our purer stage.
Our ancestors through five long acts could sit,
Mistaking gross indecency for wit;
And even females, 'neath a vizor's shade,
Intrepidly the shameless scene survey'd.
More pure the manners now, more chaste the treat
At which the muse invites you now to meet;

Whether at folly or at vice she fly,
This praise is hers, she flies with decency.

High 'mong the bards once better known to fame
Still stands recorded Massinger's proud name,
Who close to Shakespeare's matchless genius soar'd,
Who, next to Jonson, from true learning's hoard,
With skilful hand his rich materials drew,
To manners faithful, and to nature true;
Yet, who with grossness so debas'd his verse,
What he dar'd write we dare not now rehearse.
Still, since replete his lines with vig'rous thought,
Since glows the fire from inspiration caught,
Let us, on his behalf, your favour pray,
While from oblivion's gulph we snatch this play.
Clear'd from the dross which its pure ore debas'd,
The fault of fashion or the lapse of haste,
Its rank growth prun'd with no unparing hand,
Its morals mended, and its scenes new plann'd,
It trusts to you its renovated cause,
And waits your verdict—censure or applause.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR JOHN TRAFFIC,

LUKE, his Brother,

SIR MAURICE LACEY,

EDWARD LACEY,

HEARTWELL,

INVOICE,

LEDGER,

YOUNG INVOICE,

YOUNG LEDGER,

VENTURE,

RISK,

PENURY,

HOLDFAST,

BAILIFFS,

LADY TRAFFIC,

MARIA,

ELIZA,

FURBISH.

Scene.—London.

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RICHES.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Sir John Traffic's Counting House.

Enter Invoice and Ledger.

LEDGER.

THE ship is safe i' th' pool then?

INVOICE.

And makes good
her rich freight the name she bears, the Speedwell.
My master, Sir John Traffic, never made
braver speculation. On my knowledge,
who sailing in her can pronounce her value,
for ev'ry hundred that he ventur'd in her,
he hath return'd him five.

LEDGER.

Would it were mine,
Or but a tythe on't!—Well, our master needs
Supplies like this; his outgoings are great.

INVOICE.

Why, truly, things seem changed. This gorgeous mansion,
The hangings and the furnitures o' th' chambers,
Rather bespeak the state of some great lord,
Than of a London merchant. Where's our lady?
How sits her title on her? And her daughters,
Fair Moll and blooming Bess?

LEDGER.

Plain Moll and Bess!

An thou would'st 'scape correction, thou had'st best
Give them some other titles—Miss Maria,
And Miss Eliza—and with rev'rence too,
Or 'tis more punishable in our house
Than scandalum magnatum.

INVOICE.

'Tis great pity,
That such a gentleman as our good master,
Whose boundless wealth can so maintain a title,
Should want a son to inherit his estate,
And keep his name alive.

LEDGER.

The want of one

Swells my young mistresses and their proud stepmother
 With hopes above their birth and scale: their dreams are
 Of being made countesses, and they take state
 As they were such already. When you went
 To th' Indies, there was some proportion
 Becoming strangers in our house: but since
 My master was by royal favour knighted,
 'Tis grown a little court in bravery.

INVOICER.

Is Luke, his brother, living?

LEDGER.

Yes, the more

His misery, poor man!

INVOICER.

And still in prison?

LEDGER.

In a worse place, for he's translated hither.

INVOICER.

How's that?

LEDGER.

Why, sir, since here, as says the proverb,

Our mare's the better horse, poor master Luke

Hath made an ill exchange! He's freed indeed,

But our proud madam takes especial care

He still shall feel dependence. She admits him,

As 'tis our master's pleasure, to the table,

Where, after grace is said, with humble rev'rence
 He takes the lowest place, and sits the subject
 Of her contempt and scorn; and, dinner ended,
 She finds employment for him, suited better
 To a mere lackey.

INVOICE.

Strange, he should endure it,
 When other means of living may be found.
 But hold.—How wears the time?

LEDGER.

'Tis almost noon.

INVOICE.

Then must we hasten to th' Exchange.

LEDGER.

I'm with you.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Lady Traffic's Apartment.

Enter Furbish.

FURBISH.

I vow 'tis almost noon, and nothing's ready.
 Holdfast!—We shall have pretty work anon,
 When her sweet, patient ladyship returns.
 There has she been since morn, gadding about,
 Her two full-grown daughters-in-law mop'd up,

As if they still were children. Well! 'tis strange
That an old gentleman, like my wise master,
Should match himself with such a — Oh! you're here.

Enter Holdfast.

HOLDFAST.

Can one ne'er be at rest?—What with your calling,
My lady's fancies, and Sir John's commands,
I have a blessed time of it among you.
What is't you want?

FURBISH.

Good Holdfast, lend a hand—
My lady will be back immediately;
Her toilet's unprepared—

HOLDFAST.

What's that to me?
I'm not to comb her hair, or fix her patches.

FURBISH.

I wish you were, you'd then have work enough.
But do, dear Holdfast, help me to set out
These boxes—

HOLDFAST.

What! her red paint and her white?
Fragh! how these perfumes smell!—Well, wise Sir John,
You never made so ruinous a bargain,
As when you brought this shrew from Lothbury,

And, like an amorous dotard, made her tyrant
Over yourself, your daughters, and your servants.

FURBISH.

There, that will do.—I told you she was coming.
D'ye hear her?

HOLDFAST.

Can St. Paul's great bell be heard?
Its clamour is the gentlest of the two.

FURBISH.

Forbear—she'll hear you. [Exit Holdfast.

Enter Lady Traffic and Servants.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Tell Sir John, I wonder

He'll keep that blundering coachman, when he knows
How I detest his sluggish stile of driving;
Drawl! drawl along, like the Lord Mayor's state coach,
Or Mrs. Deputy Comfit, with her pair
Of sleek dock'd cart horses!—Go, tell him, sirrah,
To turn him off, and see I have another
Befitting Lady Traffic.—(*Exeunt Servants.*)—Furbish!

FURBISH.

Madam!

LADY TRAFFIC.

I'm tired to death!—I have such poor weak nerves!
Why, don't you see I'm absolutely fainting
From mere fatigue—and there you stand and gape,

And twirl your fingers—

FURBISH.

Shall I get your ladyship

The cordial water?

LADY TRAFFIC.

Name it not! A chair!

Don't you see, ideot! how I shake and tremble?

FURBISH.

There, madam—

LADY TRAFFIC.

There!—Has the wench lost her senses?

I'd better wait upon myself at once,

Than to be telling you—There, put it there!

FURBISH.

I'm sure, ma'am—

LADY TRAFFIC.

Silence! Take my hood off, can't you?

How do I look now?

FURBISH.

As I hope to see

A poor knight's son and heir walk bare before you

When you're a countess (as you may be one

Should Sir John die, or leave off merchandize)

You look as handsome now as when you married.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Why, in good truth, I think I use my fortune

With a becoming grace.—And why not use it,
 Since I am wedded to a wealthy cit,
 Who doubles me in years, with two grown girls
 Who strive to vie with me in fashion's walk.
 I'll prove to all the world I know my rights,
 And claim them too, or wherefore did I marry?

FURBISH.

I vow you've not your equal in the city.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Nay, now you're quite ridiculous. Where are
 Those gawky misses whom I call my daughters?
 'Tis a sad thing to have two may-pole creatures
 Give themselves airs, as if they had pretensions
 To attract the attentions of the men.

FURBISH.

Why truly

They're old enough to come in for a share.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Ay, so Sir John says. 'Twere a pretty jest
 For me to sacrifice my youth and beauty
 To an old man like him, and have his daughters
 Become my rivals!—No—no—I'll take care
 To keep them at a proper distance, 'till
 Some lord, attracted by their rumour'd wealth,
 Or gallant courtier, take them off my hands.

FURBISH.

Your ladyship is right. But here they are.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Aye—let them come—I want to speak to them.

Begone!

[*Exit Furbish.*]

Enter Maria and Eliza.

So ; here you are—Well, as I live,
You've taken pains, Maria, to disfigure
Yourself with that strange head. And you, Eliza,
You've made yourself a fright.

MARIA.

Will you still treat us
As we were children, when you know our age?

LADY TRAFFIC.

Your age indeed? Do you think, because you're tall,
That, therefore, you're to shove me from my place,
And take upon you to be mistresses?

ELIZA.

If we believe one half our suitors say—

MARIA.

We may believe them, surely.

LADY TRAFFIC.

No, you may not—
Think you that any will discover faults
In Sir John Traffic's heirs?—Were you as swarth
As the foul Ethiop, red-hair'd, lame, and crooked,

Let them but glance an eye upon his coffers,
And all an angel's attributes are your's.

MARIA.

Whate'er may bring them, we've enough of 'em.
My father, ere this morning he went forth,
Warn'd us we might expect two new gallants.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Their names?

MARIA.

Sir Maurice Lacy's son and heir,
And a rich country gentleman, one Heartwell.

LADY TRAFFIC.

What, commoners?—a knight's son and a squire?
A fit assortment for his lady's daughters!
Child! there's a native grossness in your father,
Which even all my counsels cannot cure.

Enter Sir John Traffic.

SIR JOHN.

So, madam, at your old amusement still,
Teaching these children to despise their father!

LADY TRAFFIC.

Why who, Sir John, could have expected you?
Cannot I be in private with your daughters,
Without your troubling us?

SIR JOHN.

Why truly, madam,

Your manners and your style of conversation
Of late are such—

LADY TRAFFIC.

Aye, aye, reproach me, sir!

SIR JOHN.

You wrong me, madam; I would not reproach you,
But I would wish you to respect yourself,
And learn more deference to your husband's will.
These endless broils, this matrimonial sparring,
Are senseless, scandalous. How can these children
Feel rev'rence for us, when we prove to them
We rev'rence not ourselves? Think you our servants
Make not their comments on us, and retail
Through the whole parish what they see and hear?
But let us have a truce. I came to tell you,
Two gentlemen, of fortune and desert,
Have ask'd my licence to present themselves
As suitors to my daughters.

LADY TRAFFIC.

How, Sir John!

I should have thought, sir, you might have known better
What's due to me, and to your daughters, sir,
Than thus to hawk them round to ev'ry one
Who has assurance to present himself.
You know I am resolv'd no commoner
Shall be my son-in-law. Ladies like them

May well aspire to rank and dignity.
Take them to court, let them be seen by lords—

SIR JOHN.

Aye, aye, let them be seen ; but meantime, madam,
My pleasure is, that they receive such suitors
As I select for them.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Mighty well, sir !

You always will insist upon your way,
And treat me—yes, you treat me shamefully,
Thwart all my wishes, always contradict me—

SIR JOHN.

For shame, for shame ! Your conscience, madam, knows
How falsely you accuse me. But no more—
I came not here to squabble, but to tell you
Sir Maurice Lacey's heir and Master Heartwell
Purpose this morning to present themselves
As suitors to my daughters. 'Tis my pleasure
They should receive them as becomes their duty.

[Exit Sir John.]

LADY TRAFFIC.

Aye, hector on, sir !—Commoners, indeed,
When there are earls at court to make you ladies !

MARIA.

We may wait long enough before they ask us.
Sure, madam, if these two are proper gentlemen,

Of courtly breeding, handsome too, and rich,
We may and ought receive them.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Grant me patience!

Have I for this taught you to bear yourselves
As suits my daughters—Lady Traffic's daughters—
Given you mine own instructions how to hold
Yourselves above the rank of city misses?

ELIZA.

Nay, madam, I am not to blame; I'm sure
You can't deny I've follow'd your instructions.
I long as much as you can do to soar
Into the splendid sphere where pleasure reigns,
To give up Easter balls for balls at court,
And change the city feasts for the delights
Which none but fashion's happy votaries know.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Answer me not, but do as I command you.
Furbish!

Enter Furbish.

My gloves! I vow I had forgot them.

FURBISH.

Those that your ladyship was pleas'd to order
Should be made of the Spanish perfum'd skins?

LADY TRAFFIC.

The same.

FURBISH.

I sent the prison-bird, poor master Luke,
This morning for them, and I marvel why
He's not ere this return'd.

LADY TRAFFIC.

I am surpriz'd
Sir John should ever think of making him
An inmate as he is. A poor, mean wretch,
Idle and sluggish—fitter for a gaol
Than to disgrace us as he does at table!

FURBISH.

He's grown extremely careless, and sometimes
Presumes to grumble when we give him orders.
Were I your ladyship, I vow I'd clear
The house of him.

MARIA.

Poor creature! I don't wonder
He feels his change of fortune.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Feel, indeed!
What right has he to feel?

MARIA.

The same that we
Ourselves would have, were we like him reduc'd
To sudden misery.

LADY TRAFFIC.

When that season comes

We may begin to think on't—Oh ! you're here !

Enter Luke, laden with hand-boxes and parcels.

You seem, sir, strangely to forget yourself.

Were you tippling last night, you rose no sooner

To do what she commanded ?

LUKE.

Tippling, so please you ?

LADY TRAFFIC.

Answer me not. Dost dare to grumble, thou,
Whom, when thy patrimony was all spent,
We sav'd from prison ?

LUKE.

I confess I am

Your creature, madam, for to your great goodness
I owe it all. For it you have my prayers,
The beggar's satisfaction ; all my studies
(Forgetting what I was, but with all duty
Rememb'ring what I am) are how to please you ;
And if in my long stay I have offended,
I ask your pardon : though you may consider,
Being forc'd to fetch these from th' old Exchange,
These from the Tower, and these from Westminster,
I could not come much sooner.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Silence ! Bear them .

To the next chamber, sir.—Why dost not move ?

LUKE.

I will!

I will, good madam.

LADY TRAFFIC.

No more murmuring,

But go.

[*Exit Luke.*]

(To Maria and Eliza.)

You two may follow me—I've more
 To say to you. You seem to think yourselves
 Above my governance; but you shall find,
 Howe'er Sir John pretends to give the law,
 That Lady Traffic can maintain her rights,
 And make you feel her just prerogative. [*Excunt.*]

SCENE III.

*A Hall in Sir John Traffic's House.**Enter Sir Maurice Lacey, Edward Lacey, and Holdfast.*

SIR MAURICE.

Be pleas'd, good fellow, to acquaint your master,
 Sir Maurice Lacey and his son are here,
 Awaiting his good pleasure.

HOLDFAST.

You have chosen

A time ill-suited to your purposes,
 For he hath occupation.—Who comes here?

Enter Heartwell.

HEARTWELL.

Art thou Sir John's domestic?

HOLDFAST.

Aye;—what then?

HEARTWELL.

Then I request thee, to apprize him that
One master Heartwell comes to wait on him,
And his two fair daughters.

EDWARD (*aside.*)

Mark'd you that?

SIR MAURICE.

Be patient for awhile.

HEARTWELL.

Did'st thou not hear?

HOLDFAST.

I did.

HEARTWELL.

And wherefore go'st thou not?

HOLDFAST.

I will.

[*Exit Holdfast.*]

HEARTWELL.

A crusty knave, methinks. Whom have we here?
The goodness of the day be on you, gentlemen.

SIR MAURICE.

On you, sir, equally. May I inquire

What business brings you hither?

HEARTWELL.

Marry, sir,

My business soon is told; if 'twere as soon
Brought to conclusion happily, 'twere well.
You doubtless know Sir John hath two fair daughters,
Joint heirs to his great wealth. To try my chance
Of gaining one of them am I come hither.

EDWARD.

And which of them d'ye mean, sir, to address?

HEARTWELL.

Faith, sir, that's as it proves. I'll see them both,
And, as I like them, choose.

EDWARD.

And do you think
Thus like the Turk to throw your handkerchief,
And grace submissive beauty by your choice?
I wish to know your name and quality.

HEARTWELL.

So courteous is your greeting, I will tell you.
Frank Heartwell is my name; my quality,
A Glos'tershire esquire, whose lands return him
Three thousand pounds a year. You know me now.

EDWARD.

I do; and now, Sir 'squire, you shall know me.
I am this gentleman's apparent heir;

Be pleas'd to know him as Sir Maurice Lacey,
 Who, or his reputation on the Exchange
 Is falsely rated, hath a fortune far
 Exceeding your poor rents. And, sir, moreover,
 I'm here to claim the first choice of his daughters.

HEARTWELL.

Concise and pithy. Now hear my reply.
 Though all his rich reversion now were thine,
 It should not in the way of affection make me
 Give thee precedence. I will visit them,
 Though thou stood'st porter to deny me entrance.

SIR MAURICE.

We shall have quarrelling anon. Sweet son!
 Be patient—

EDWARD.

I do hereby give you caution,
 As you esteem the safety of your life—

SIR MAURICE.

Good Master Heartwell—

HEARTWELL.

Nay, as he begin,
 I'll not be first to end. (They draw.)

Enter Sir John Traffic and Luke.

SIR JOHN.

What's hereto do?
 Men of your quality to breed this stir!

Hath this fair kingdom no presumptuous foe,
That thus you turn your swords against each other?

HEARTWELL.

He claims precedence in your daughter's favour—

EDWARD.

He takes upon him to dispute my right
Of prior choice.

SIR JOHN.

Was this your ground of quarrel?
Is your hot moody blood so quickly stirr'd,
That thus you make my hall your fencing school?

SIR MAURICE.

Nay, good Sir John, on your old friend's account
Pass over this extravagance.—(*To E. Lacey*).—Why,
Ned!

Hast not a word? E'en now you said too much.

EDWARD.

I humbly beg forgiveness for my share
In this offence; but, as for him who caus'd it—

HEARTWELL.

Nay, sir, I ask your pardon too; but for
That delicate young gentleman, a time
May come—

SIR JOHN.

A time may come? For what, I pray?
For shame, young men! Do you think my daughters can

Be won by such behaviour? You are both
 Men of respect, and so should treat each other.
 For my sake do so. Here, approach, shake hands.
 Come, I'll conduct you to my daughters; there
 Make your approaches, and, if their affections
 Can sympathize with yours, they shall not come,
 On my credit, beggars to you. Good Sir Maurice,
 I pray excuse me.

[Exeunt Sir John, E. Lacey, and Heartwell.]

SIR MAURICE.

How now, master Luke!

I'm glad to see you here.

LUKE.

I thank your worship.

SIR MAURICE.

Your hand, good master Luke! The world's changed
 with you,
 Within these few months. Then you were the gallant;
 No meeting at a horse-race, cocking, hunting,
 Shooting, or bowling, at which master Luke
 Was not a principal gamester, and companion
 For the nobility.

LUKE.

I have paid dear,
 Good sir, for all these follies: 'tis but justice

That such as soar above their pitch, and will not
 Be warn'd by my example, should, like me,
 Share in the miseries that wait upon it.
 Your honour in your charity may do well
 Not to upbraid me with those weaknesses
 Too late repented.

SIR MAURICE.

I nor do, nor will ;
 And you shall find I'll lend a helping hand
 To raise your fallen fortunes,

LUKE.

Generous sir !
 Your goodness far exceeds my poor desert.
 Alas ! I have not merited such kindness,
 Nor can I make return, save by my pray'rs
 And endless benedictions.

SIR MAURICE.

Say no more—
 Rely on me. I have it in my power
 To be of service to you : if henceforth
 You do renounce your follies, and pursue
 A wiser course, I'll put you in a way
 To bring up what is past.

LUKE.

I've had enough

Of folly, worthy sir, and have reflected
Too seriously upon my late misconduct,
Again to be seduced by her enticements.
Believe me, sir, I am an alter'd man :
My mind is strengthen'd by adversity ;
And, if good fortune ever should befriend me,
I'll make a different use of it.

SIR MAURICE.

That's well.

I trust you will. How deals your brother with you ?

LUKE.

Beyond my merit. Thank his goodness for it,
I am a free man, all my debts discharged,
Nor does one creditor, undone by me,
Curse my loose riots. I have meat and cloaths ;
Time to ask heav'n remission for what's past :
Cares of the world by me are laid aside ;
My present poverty's a blessing to me ;
And, though I have liv'd long, I dare not say
I ever liv'd till now.

SIR MAURICE.

You bear it well ;

Your brother's generous treatment of you shews
He has more feeling than the world allows him.
I've heard, that, in th' acquirement of his wealth,

He has been accounted harsh, as one who weighs not
Whose ruin he builds upon.

LUKE.

In that, report
Doth foully wrong him. He is a merchant, sir,
Who would increase his heap, and will not lose
What the law gives him.

SIR MAURICE.

Therein he is right,
Nay, much to be commended. Thus it is,
That envy oft depreciates good desert !
'Tis certain you were like to know him best ;
And, were it merely gratitude which makes you
Give him this commendation, it becomes you.

LUKE.

My gratitude is boundless, I confess ;
Yet cannot that, or any other feeling,
Lead me beyond the truth. I know him, sir,
For what I do report him, kind and noble.
But since your honour, as I grieve to think,
Still doubts my unsupported testimony,
You are come opportunely. I can bring you,
Where you unseen may see and hear his carriage
Tow'rd some poor men, whose making or undoing
Depends upon his pleasure.

A COMEDY.

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SIR MAURICE.

To my wish.

I know no object that could more content me.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in Sir John Traffic's House.

Enter Sir John, Heartwell, and Edward Lacey.

SIR JOHN.

THIS way, good gentlemen.—Who waits?

Enter Furbish.

Well, Furbish,

Where is your lady?

FURBISH.

She is gone forth, sir;

My lady Varnish call'd to give her notice

Of a great sale of Indian rarities,

Where all the quality will be assembled.

SIR JOHN (*aside*).

Ever thus gadding, and consorting with

The vain and idle!—Though it may be better

Her interference should not interrupt us.

(*To Furbish*) Where are my daughters?

A COMEDY.

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FURBISH.

In their chamber, sir.

SIR JOHN.

Require them to come hither.

FURBISH (*aside*).

As I live,

Two likely gentlemen. Were they but lords—

SIR JOHN.

Will you be pleased to call my daughters hither?

FURBISH.

Yes, sir.—(*Aside*) Were I in my young ladies' place,

They should not ask me twice. [*Exit.*]

SIR JOHN.

Well, gentlemen,

The absence of my lady will afford you

A freer opportunity to judge

How far my daughters merit your affections.

A father's fondness often may mislead him,

But I do think they are deserving of you.

HEARTWELL.

That's but a slender compliment, good sir.

She, who can't merit praises far superior

To a comparison with my desert,

Were hardly worth the seeking.

EDWARD.

Your fair daughters

Are treasures worthy of a king's ambition.

SIR JOHN.

Why, they're good girls, and handsome too, I think;
A little spoilt, perhaps, by over fondness:
And as for fortune, you already know
What I can do for them. But here they come.

Enter Maria and Eliza.

What think you now?

HEARTWELL.

That the reality
Surpasses all that expectation dar'd
To picture of perfection.

SIR JOHN.

That is well.

Come hither, loves—these are the gentlemen
I told you of to-day. Here, master Heartwell,
And master Lacey, pray ye know my daughters.
(*To Maria and Eliza*) Nay, draw not back—they are
deserving of you.

ELIZA.

Their presence, sir, assures us they are so,
And in all courtesy they may expect
Such favour as becomes us to confer;
But, with observance of my lady's order,
They may not ask, not can we grant them more.

EDWARD.

Can such a sentence come from lips like those
Which nature form'd so lovely?—Can disdain
Glance from those eyes where ambush'd Cupids lurk?
Ah! kill not thus the rising hope which cheers
A heart already gone an age in love!

ELIZA.

Were I to let you cherish idle hopes,
I might deserve reproach. My father knows
What I have said is true.

SIR JOHN.

Aye, ay, I know it,
And am asham'd on't. 'Tis a silly whim
My lady has ta'en up, that nought beneath
Nobility, shall aim at our alliance.

HEARTWELL.

I can respect nobility as much
As her good ladyship; but know no cause
Why a plain honest gentleman should scruple
To aim at a fair lady, though his 'scutcheon
Boast not a coronet.—(*To Maria.*)—If I may trust
Th' intelligence of that sweet countenance,
You'll not confirm this tyrannous decree.

MARIA.

I pray you spare me, sir. My lady's will

Leaves us no choice. Our duty is obedience.

SIR JOHN.

Come, say no more; this def'rence is mistim'd.

I find I have been wanting to myself,

In giving thus way to idle fancies.

'Tis time to curb them now.—(*To Heartwell and Edward Lacey.*)—Be of good courage :

I will stand by you.

MARIA.

Aye, sir! so you say;

But when my lady comes, perhaps—

SIR JOHN.

What then?

Shall I be govern'd in a case like this?

These are two noble gentlemen, whose wealth

And character are known, and whose alliance

Does us all honour. Nay, you'll find them so.

I sanction their pretensions. Master Heartwell,

And you, the son of my much valued friend,

Speak for yourselves, and boldly urge your suit.

You've my full licence.

MARIA.

Nay, sir, since you please,

We must not disobey you. But remember,

'Tis your own doing; you must not desert us.

SIR JOHN.

Well, well, depend on me. Here, gentlemen,
 You'll have no interruption. Take their hands,
 Plead well your cause, and heaven prosper you.
 I'm call'd away upon some urgent bus'ness ;
 But you can do without me. So that's well—
 Gain but their hearts, and I'll secure the rest.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

*Sir John's Counting House.**Enter Sir Maurice Lacey, and Luke.*

LUKE.

Here, in this chamber, if it please your honour,
 You may conceal yourself, and overhear
 What passes 'twixt my brother and those persons
 Of whom I told you.

SIR MAURICE.

Thanks, good master Luke :

This care for his good name shews nobly in you.
 I do respect you for it.

LUKE.

'Tis no more

Than I am bound to do. But stay not thus ;
 Take heed he do not see you, sir.

(Sir Maurice retires.)

Enter Sir John.

Kind brother!

To whose blest liberality I owe
My freedom, my support—

SIR JOHN.

No more of this—

So thou prov'st worthy of my favour, Luke,
I never shall repent the good I've done thee :
But thou hast still a long account to settle,
A vast arrear of follies to bring up,
Ere I can hold thee in my confidence.
'Tis not a shew of sorrow, nor professions
Of deep regret for errors that undid thee,
That can efface their characters. I hope,
And would indeed believe, thou art sincere.

LUKE.

Alas! what other means have I to prove
My true repentance and my change of life,
But those professions and that shew of sorrow,
Unless it be obedience to your will,
And zeal to serve you? For what else am I
But your poor creature—servant to your pleasure—
Most bound to you in ev'ry act of life,
And living only for your gracious service,
And that of your dear lady and fair daughters?

SIR JOHN.

Prove this, but speak it not. I am come here
To learn what Venture and his fellow debtors
Can urge to stay the process of the law.
Bid them approach.

LUKE.

I do obey you, sir.

[*Exit.*]

SIR JOHN.

He may be what he seems : there are examples
Of thorough reformation brought about
By the correction of adversity ;
But they are rare. The seeds by nature planted
Take a deep root i' th' soil : and though for a time
The trenchant share and tearing harrow may
Sweep all appearance of them from the surface,
Yet with the first warm rains of spring they'll shoot,
And with their rankness smother the good grain.
Heav'n grant it mayn't be so with him !

Enter Luke, Venture, Risk, and Penury.

LUKE.

Here are
Your humble suitors, sir, to wait upon you.

SIR JOHN.

What would you have me do ?—(*To Luke*) Give me a
chair. (*Sits.*)

RISK.

Be pleas'd, sir, to consider my hard case.
 My land is mortgag'd for a third of it's value :
 I had no more. Pray give me longer day.

SIR JOHN.

I know no obligation lies on me,
 To lose my proper right. Your deed speaks for it.
 How much owes Penury ?

LUKE.

Six hundred pounds.
 His bond too is grown forfeit.

SIR JOHN.

Is it sued ?

LUKE.

Yes, sir, and execution out.

SIR JOHN.

See it serv'd.

PENURY.

I am undone ! My wife and family
 Must starve for want of bread.

SIR JOHN.

What's Venture's debt ?

LUKE.

Two thousand, sir.

SIR JOHN.

Two thousand ?—An estate

For a good man. You were the glorious trader,
Embrac'd all bargains, the main venturer
In ev'ry ship that launch'd forth. Tell me, sir,
How was this sum employ'd?

VENTURE.

Insult me not
On my calamity!—though, being a debtor,
And slave to him that lends, I must endure it.
Yet hear me speak thus much in my defence:
Losses at sea—and those, sir, great and many—
By storms and pirates, not domestic riot,
Have brought me to this low ebb.

SIR JOHN.

Storms and pirates!
The cant of fraudulent insolvency!
Look you, I must and will, sir, have my money.

VENTURE.

I'm in your pow'r, and you must do your pleasure.

LUKE.

Not as a brother, sir, but with such duty
As I should use unto a father, since
Your charity is my parent, give me leave
To speak my thoughts.

SIR JOHN.

What would you say?

LUKE. I have said, and I will say

Aloud, and I will say it over and over again. No word, sir,

I hope shall give offence: nor let it relish

Of flatt'ry, though I proclaim aloud, that you are rich

I glory in the bravery of your mind, and in your industry

To which your wealth's a servant. Not that riches

Are or should be condemn'd, they being a blessing

Deriv'd from heaven, and by your industry

Pull'd down upon you. But in this, dear sir,

You have many equals: such a man's possessions

Extend as far as your's; a second hath

His bags as full; a third in credit flies

As high in the popular voice: but the distinction

And noble difference, by which you are

Divided from them, is, that you are styl'd

Gentle in your abundance, good in plenty,

And that you feel compassion in your bowels

Of other's miseries; (I have found it, sir,

Heav'n keep me thankful for't) while they are curs'd

As rigid and inexorable

SIR JOHN. I do not think you are

So much as you pretend. I delight not

To hear this spoken.

DUMPER. I am not of your party

That shall not aggrieve you

But I am of your party

That shall

Your affability and mildness, cloath'd
 In the pure garment of your debtor's breath,
 Shall ev'ry where, though you strive to conceal it,
 Be seen and wonder'd at; and in the act
 With prodigal hand rewarded; whereas such
 As are born only for themselves, and live so,
 Though prosperous in worldly understandings,
 Are but like beasts of rapine, that, by odds
 Of strength, usurp and tyrannize o'er others,
 Brought under their subjection.

SIR MAURICE (*listening*).

That was well said.
 He puts it to him home.

LUKE.

Can you think, sir,
 In your unquestion'd wisdom, I beseech you,
 The goods of this poor man sold at an auction,
 His wife turn'd out of doors, his children forc'd
 To beg their bread—this gentleman's estate,
 Thus harshly taken, can advantage you?
 Or that the ruin of this once brave merchant,
 (For such he was esteem'd; though now decay'd)
 Will raise your reputation with good men?
 But you may urge—pray pardon me, my zeal
 Makes me thus bold and vehement—in this
 You satisfy your anger and revenge,

On those who wrong you. Grant this : it will not
Repair your loss ; and there was never yet
But shame and scandal in a victory,
When passion, rebel unto reason, fought it.
Then for revenge : by great souls it was ever
Contemn'd, though offer'd ; entertain'd by none
But cowards, base and abject spirits, strangers
To moral honesty, and never yet
Acquainted with religion.

SIR MAURICE (*listening*).

How he speaks !

He has won my heart for ever.

SIR JOHN.

Shall I be talk'd

Out of my money ?

LUKE.

No, sir—but intreated
To do yourself a benefit, and preserve
What you possess entire.

SIR JOHN.

How, my good brother ?

LUKE.

By making these your beadsmen.—When they eat,
Their thanks, next heaven, will be paid to your mercy;
When your ships are at sea, their pray'rs will swell
Their sails with prosp'rous winds, and guard them from

Tempests and quicksands ; keep your warehouses
From fire, or quench them with their tears—

SIR JOHN.

No more.

LUKE.

Write you a good man in the people's hearts—
Follow you ev'ry where—

SIR JOHN.

If this could be—

LUKE.

It must, or our devotions are but words.
I see a gentle promise in your eye ;
Make it a blessed act, and poor me rich
In being the instrument.

SIR JOHN (*rising*).

You have prevail'd—
Give them more time. But d'ye hear, no talk on't.
Should this arrive at noon on the Exchange,
I shall be laugh'd at for my foolish pity.
Take your own time—I'll not be hard upon you.
I know what you would say—There is no need—
Go—drink a cup, and thank your orator.

LUKE.

I will attend upon you.

[*Exeunt Luke, Venture, Risk, and Penury.*]

Sir Maurice advances.

SIR JOHN.

What, Sir Maurice!

Whence come you thus o' th' sudden?

SIR MAURICE.

I must crave

Forgiveness for the freedom I have taken,

To overhear your conference with those

Whose heavy hearts are lighten'd by your goodness.

SIR JOHN.

You heard all then?

SIR MAURICE.

I did. Your kind forbearance,

And your good brother's eloquent appeal

To your best feelings.

SIR JOHN.

His discourse was shrewd,

And mainly to the purpose.

SIR MAURICE.

'Twas divine,

And breath'd a spirit so attun'd to mercy,

I wonder, good Sir John, his qualities

Are so pass'd over, that you keep him as

A parasite at your table, subject to

The scorn of your proud wife, an underling

To his own nieces.

SIR JOHN.

Sir, I have good reason
 For what I do. First, he had a fair estate,
 Which his loose riots quickly brought to nothing.
 This argues ill, you'll own. Next, I've done much
 For him already; when for heavy debt
 He was in prison, of all else forsaken,
 And in his own hopes lost, I did redeem him.

SIR MAURICE.

It was well done of you; exceeding well.

SIR JOHN.

I hope it was; but I would first be sure
 He does deserve it, ere I do more for him.
 His nature was not always what it seems;
 And virtue, suddenly assum'd, is oft
 A cloak to cover much depravity.

SIR MAURICE.

You surely do him wrong.

SIR JOHN.

Time may afford us
 An opportunity to know the truth.
 But we must to our suitors. To speak plainly,
 I have my doubts of their reception.
 Nothing, below nobility, can suit
 My wife's ambition; and, when she is cross'd,
 She's apt to give full rein to her displeasure.

SIR MAURICE.

I marvel much, Sir John, you should give way
To female governance: methinks 'twere well
Were you to curb a petulance, that springs
From your too great indulgence.

SIR JOHN.

'Tis more easy
To give good council, than to follow it.
Sir, there are secrets in all families,
Of which the least we say perhaps the better.
But now my mind is fix'd upon these matches,
And you shall see I can be firm, Sir Maurice!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

*Another Apartment in Sir John's House.**Enter Maria, Eliza, Heartwell, and Edward Lacey.*

EDWARD.

What can we say to move you to compliance?
Will you, like coy princesses in romance,
Treat us like errant knights, and send us forth
To seek adventures, and to bring home trophies
In honour of your beauty?

ELIZA.

We have told you
The spell which is impos'd upon ourselves.

If you can break the talisman that guards us,
You may succeed; if not, your hopes are lost.

HEARTWELL.

Why what a strange Urganda is this lady,
Who throws up her entrenchments thus around you,
To keep off honest-hearted gentlemen,
Who would redeem you from such slavish thralldom,
And shew you as you are, nature's perfection!
But, if I'm fated to encounter dragons,
Let me confront them speedily.

MARIA.

Beware—

Your enterprize, perhaps, may not prove easy.

HEARTWELL.

I'm not so readily to be alarm'd.
Place danger on one hand, and you on th' other,
And see if I shall flinch.

MARIA.

Give over—hush—

My mother is return'd, I hear her coming.

Enter Lady Traffic.

LADY TRAFFIC.

So, you have got your gentlemen, I see.

MARIA.

This, ma'am, is master Heartwell, and this other
Sir Maurice Lacey's eldest son and heir.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Well, sirs, instruct me what are your commands.

HEARTWELL.

With the respect it suits you to receive,
 And us to pay you, I will speak our purpose.
 As good Sir John hath told you who we are,
 What are our means, and how we are dispos'd
 To make a fitting settlement on her
 Whom love and fortune may bestow on us,
 We crave your gracious leave to urge our suit.
 It were presumption to decide between them;
 Both are alike so fair and so endow'd
 With every charm to captivate and keep
 Affection, that, like Paris, when he held
 'Midst rival goddesses the prize of beauty,
 My wandering eye scarce knows on which to fix.
 But he at length decided for his Venus,
 And here, so please you, madam, I choose mine.

(Takes Maria's hand.)

EDWARD *(to Eliza)*.

When on this hand I bow and sue for favour,
 'Tis not because another has preferr'd
 Your lovely sister. Had I felt for her
 What I now feel for you, no power on earth
 Had forc'd me to surrender her; but when
 I gaze upon your beauties, hear your voice,

See that enchanting smile—Forgive me, fair one,
 If my fond hopes mislead me—I profess
 Myself your willing slave, and on your sentence
 Rest all my future views of happiness.
 What says my lovely judge?

LADY TRAFFIC.

I'll answer for them.

They speak and act but as I please they should.

EDWARD.

How well then, madam, must they act and speak?

LADY TRAFFIC.

That's not ill said; but truce with compliments—
 You'll find that more than words are wanting.

EDWARD.

Madam,

Methinks we have already giv'n you more.

What is't you'd have? We have profess'd ourselves
 Ready to make substantial settlements,
 Proportion'd to their fortunes.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Psha! a trifle!

HEARTWELL.

Our heirs, I fear me, will not find it so,
 When they're oblig'd to pay it.

EDWARD.

Come, good madam,

Do not thus keep us in suspense.

LADY TRAFFIC (*to Edward*).

I think

Your father is a merchant?

EDWARD.

Aye, a brave one—

Equal to any known on the Exchange.

LADY TRAFFIC (*to Heartwell*).

And you, sir, what do you call yourself?

HEARTWELL.

A man!

An honest man—a country gentleman.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Stand forth, thou citizen! and farmer, thou!

(*To Edward*)—Think'st thou, because thy father in a
bargain

Can circumvent a broker, thou art worthy

To match thee with my daughter?—(*To Heartwell*) Or
think you,

Because you feed fat cattle in your marshes,

And know the price of corn, how much per bushel,

That all this qualifies you to aspire

To be my son-in-law?

HEARTWELL.

Aye, to be more,

Were any thing superior! What's this scorn,

Ungracious lady ! of your country's honour,
 An English freeholder ? I boast that title,
 And would not for a foreign dukedom change it.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Keep it, and welcome ; but of this be sure,
 'Till you can boast a rank more dignified,
 You are not for my daughter.

EDWARD.

Nay, good madam—

LADY TRAFFIC.

You know my mind. What more have you to say ?

HEARTWELL.

Faith ! madam, little, but that we came here
 By the permission of Sir John himself,
 Whose sanction is sufficient for our license.

LADY TRAFFIC.

You'll find it otherwise. Sir John, indeed !
 This is a case, sit, give me leave to tell you,
 Where I by special privilege may challenge
 A casting voice ; and I will have it too.

HEARTWELL.

As by heaven's grace, and this fair creature's favour,
 I trust to call you lady mother shortly,
 I'll not dispute that with you.—*(To Maria)* My fair one,
 Will you disdain an honest man's affection ?

LADY TRAFFIC.

I do command her silence. *(To Maria)* Come here,
girl.

(To Heartwell) Let go her hand. *(To Edward Latcy)*

And you, too, saucy sir—

EDWARD.

Nay, madam, this is wrong. Give us fair play—

LADY TRAFFIC *(to Maria and Eliza)*

Come here. I tell you both—loosen their hands—

Enter Sir John and Sir Maurice.

SIR JOHN.

Hey day! what's all this stir?

LADY TRAFFIC.

Do you bring plebeians

To mix their puddle with a stream like that

Which flows within these veins?

SIR JOHN.

Patience, good Meg!

Why sure thou dost forget thyself, my love!

Thy father was a worthy fishmonger,

And liv'd in Lothbury—thy mother was—

LADY TRAFFIC.

I'll not demean myself to answer you;

But if you stir a step, sir—

SIR JOHN.

Come, my Molly,

And you too, Bess!—What say you?—Speak, my girls.

MARIA.

I scarce can venture, sir, to speak my mind,

Or I should say—

LADY TRAFFIC.

I charge you to be silent.

ELIZA.

Sir, with a maiden's diffidence, I may

Presume to tell you—

LADY TRAFFIC.

You must talk too, must you?

SIR JOHN.

Why, won't you let the girls speak?

LADY TRAFFIC.

No, I won't.

SIR JOHN.

What's here to do? Is this becoming treatment

For gentlemen like these, my worthy friends,

Who honour us by seeking our alliance?

LADY TRAFFIC.

They may be friends of yours, for ought I care,

But they are not fit suitors for your daughters.

And as for you, Sir John—

SIR JOHN.

Nay, nay, no more—

Hear what I say—

LADY TRAFFIC.

I will not hear a word.

I've heard too much already. You and they

May carry on your projects as you please,

But 'tis full time that I should have my way.

(To Maria and Eliza) Come here, both of you.*(To Heartwell and Edward Lacey)* You have had your
answer,

And you, sir, your's. We'll see who governs here!

(To Maria and Eliza) There, get you out. Sir John! if
you presume

To take a single step without my license,

I'll make you know both who and what I am, sir!

[Exeunt Lady Traffic, Maria, and Eliza.]

HEARTWELL.

I'd rather stand upon the bleakest summit

Of our bare wolds in a December's night,

Wrapt in a wet sheet, than again encounter

Such a virago! Farewell, good Sir John!

Your daughter is an angel, but your wife—

I give you joy of her! *[Exit Heartwell.]*

EDWARD.

I hop'd to find

In your alliance happiness and honour.

Your daughter, sir, is all my fondest hope

Could picture of perfection? but her mother—

I spare you more reflections—on my soul
 I pity you, Sir John! I do, indeed;
 Nay, all the world must pity you. Farewell!

[Exit Edward Lacey.]

(Sir John and Sir Maurice stand looking dolefully at each other. After a pause.)

SIR MAURICE.

Sir John!

SIR JOHN.

Sir Maurice!

SIR MAURICE.

Our affairs, methinks,
 Go bravely on. There's in your lady's manner
 Something so soft, so mild, so captivating—
 I'll warrant me, that your reflections too
 Must be prodigiously amusing to you.

SIR JOHN.

Spare me, my friend; the ulcer in my heart
 Should not be prob'd so roughly. I'm asham'd
 To think how far my weakness for that woman
 Has led me to give up my rightful claim
 To rule in mine own house; but, as the fever
 Which riots in our blood, and undermines
 The source of life, oft brings on it's own crisis,
 So shall my very shame work it's own cure.

SIR MAURICE.

That's well resolv'd. But how?

SIR JOHN.

Give me a moment—

You think my brother Luke a worthy man?

SIR MAURICE.

I'm sure he's such.

SIR JOHN.

Deserving confidence?

SIR MAURICE.

Why ask you this?

SIR JOHN.

I have my reasons for it.

Well, well; I'll think him so, and as such trust him.

SIR MAURICE.

To what intent, I pray?

SIR JOHN.

I'll tell you shortly.

Let's to the fields; and taste the air awhile.

I want a sedative, to calm the choler

Which clouds my better judgment. Good Sir Maurice,

The time is come, when my proud wife shall learn

A lesson, strong enough to teach her wisdom.

[Exeunt.]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

The Garden of Sir Maurice Lacey.

Enter Sir John and Sir Maurice.

SIR JOHN.

Now we are private, give me leave, my friend,
 to unburthen my sad heart. The scene you have wit-
 ness'd
 is but a sample of the violence
 that robs me of all peace and happiness.
 And that I have held too lax a rein,
 and by indulgence foster'd a proud spirit,
 which now disdains all governance.

SIR MAURICE.

'Tis well
 I think so. Knowledge of an evil, sir,
 helps one to its cure.

SIR JOHN.

Give me your patience.

My evil now is grown exorbitant,

And calls for instant remedy. I've thought
Of one which haply may succeed.

SIR MAURICE.

Go on.

SIR JOHN.

Why this, in short, it is. As by indulgence
This insolence has risen to its height,
So, by experience of adversity,
It may be curb'd. Now, sir, I have conceiv'd
The means of doing this.

SIR MAURICE.

I long to hear it.

SIR JOHN.

Wealth, and the authority which follows it,
Have wrought upon my stubborn lady's pride,
'Till she forgets herself, and what she owes
Both to herself and me. My purpose is,
By a strong unexpected stroke to cast her
From the high pinnacle of vanity,
Into apparent ruin and dependance.

SIR MAURICE.

But how may this be done?

SIR JOHN.

I mean to tell you.

Your good opinion of my brother Luke
Hath led me to make him mine instrument ;

I shall require your succour too, Sir Maurice.

SIR MAURICE.

'Tis at your service in so good a cause.

SIR JOHN.

I must remain secreted in your house,
While you report to my ungracious wife
The unexpected tidings of my death.

SIR MAURICE.

Are you in earnest?

SIR JOHN.

Not to die, believe me.
But to be thought dead. You must bear my will,
Whereby I give the total of my substance
To Luke—

SIR MAURICE.

I see it all—'tis excellent.

SIR JOHN.

Remember,

You must put on a melancholy air ;
And, as you tell of my disastrous fate,
Sigh dismally, and, if you can, squeeze out
A tear or two—

SIR MAURICE.

Leave me to act my part :
I'll do it to the life.—Odso ! your will—
Where is't ?

SIR JOHN.

It shall be drawn for you forthwith;
 And here's my secret key o'the counting-house.
 When you produce them see you mark th' effect
 They have upon my brother and my wife.
 I only fear it may o'erpower her !
 There is a tenderness in woman's nature—

SIR MAURICE.

I warrant her ; her feelings may be trusted.
 You ought to know her better. Her proud spirit
 Wants a corrective, and she'll have one now.
 Some sudden strong revulsion is requir'd
 To moderate her hot temperament.
 Trust me, my friend, both she and you hereafter
 Will be the better for it.

SIR JOHN.

Turn as it will,
 One of my purposes must be fulfill'd.
 If Luke be such as you conceive he is,
 If he can bear prosperity as well
 As he hath stood the shock of adverse fortune,
 I gain a treasure in him : if he fail,
 And change of circumstances only serves
 To bring his evil nature into action,
 A short dependance on his tyranny
 Will prove a lesson, not to be forgotten

When the delusion's past.

SIR MAURICE.

Howe'er that prove,
I feel assur'd your brother will be found,
Such as I think he is.

SIR JOHN.

Heav'n grant he may!

I loath suspicion: 'tis a fiend that preys
Upon the nobler virtues of the heart,
And by it's morbid touch converts them all
To gall and mortal poison. Prove him well,
I pray you; mark his change of countenance
When he first hears your tidings—probe his soul—

SIR MAURICE.

Enough—leave it to me. But come, time presses—
I must set out upon mine embassy.
See you keep close; let no one know you're here.

SIR JOHN.

Away then! May success attend upon you!
My happiness depends on your report.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Sir John's Counting House.

Enter Invoice, Ledger, and Holdfast.

HOLDFAST.

The like was never seen!

INVOICE.

Why in this rage, man?

HOLDFAST.

You may talk of country christmasses, or treats
 Giv'n at elections, where the tables groan
 With haunches of fat venison, beef, and pudding,
 And gluttons, cram'd to surfeit, with their teeth
 Dig their own graves; or you may tell; an you will,
 Of Roman luxury, or modern French,
 Yet what were they, compar'd with this of ours?

LEDGER.

What's all this noise about?

HOLDFAST.

Would'st thou believe!

I tell thee, master Ledger—S'life! it maddens me
 To think on such excess—Some hungry devil
 Has whisper'd in my rampant lady's ear,
 And taught her how to squander! Such profusion,
 As in the bill of fare she has deliver'd
 For one day's meal!

INVOICE.

What is all this to thee?

Thou'rt not to pay for it.

HOLDFAST.

What's worst of all,

When I objected to th' expence, my lady

Call'd me penurious rascal, and advised me
To mind my own concerns.

INVOICE.

She counsell'd rightly.

HOLDFAST.

Well, let her take her swing : I care not for't.
Three dinners such would break an alderman.
I'll have no hand in't. I'll make up my accounts,
And, since my master longs to be undone,
'Tis his concern, not mine. *[Exit Holdfast.]*

LEDGER.

That is a maxim,
To which I don't subscribe ; for, if my master
Is in the way to ruin, 'tis the part
Of a true servant to promote his wishes.
The work is soonest done, when many join.

INVOICE.

That's true. Suppose we lend a helping hand?
Could we contrive to compass without danger
Such a small trifle as a thousand pounds—

LEDGER.

'Twould set us up again.

INVOICE.

It would do so.

But how ? there lies the point—oh ! master Luke—

Enter Luke.

LUKE.

So, still at work ; ever intent upon
Your master's interest.

LEDGER.

True, most noble Luke ;
Like trusty servitors, we were reflecting
On the connection that subsists between
His interests and our own.

INVOICE.

We were debating
A case of conscience. Honest master Luke,
Since my return, I've heard of your reverses,
The drudgery they put you to, the scorn
Wherewith they treat you. I remember, once
You were a knowing one, could take the odds,
And at a few cool hundreds aim so surely,
You seldom miss'd your mark.

LUKE.

Talk not of that :
I'm now an alter'd man.

LEDGER.

Alter'd ?—In what ?
Your means indeed are less, but you are still
The same kind-natur'd, noble soul.—What think you ?

Were a good friend to put you in the road
To be revenged of fortune—what would'st say?

LUKE.

I'm poor, and therefore I would not object
Once more to make experiment of wealth.
I am dependent, and I would be free.

LEDGER.

Well, sir—to put a case—were such a friend
To shew that you might gain not only wealth,
But independence, would you thank him for it?

LUKE.

I should account him a good friend indeed.

LEDGER.

I guess'd you'd say so. Well, such a friend am I.

LUKE.

You are passing kind.

LEDGER.

I am. Give me your hand.

I do compassionate your fallen state,
And, were I sure I could confide in thee,
I could impart a secret.

LUKE (*aside*).

What means this?

I must know more.—(*To Ledger*.)—Confide in me, dost
say?

I would not wish to worm your secret from you,

But as for confidence—

INVOICE (*to Ledger.*)

Tell him at once.

I know him well of old. He'll do for us.

LEDGER.

Well, master Luke, I'll tell thee. We were thinking,
Wert thou consenting, how we might devise
Means to replenish our exhausted pockets.
We all are poor; our master hath abundance;
And what would make us rich would not affect him.
What say'st thou to it? Could'st thou not suggest
Some efficacious plan?

LUKE.

Hast thou not served

Almost thy stated term?—(*To Invoice*)—And hast thou
traded

To farther India, thus to ask me council?

Go to some other, more expert to treat

These subtle practices!—I've met with those

Can do it well; nay, I have heard them speak

Such marvels, as would put Autolycus

And Mercury, his father, to the blush,

So far did they outdo them in contrivance.

INVOICE.

What was't they said?

LUKE.

I'll tell you that anon.

First I would know if you've no means o' your own
To compass this brave enterprize. I warrant
You have not liv'd so long without a trial.

LEDGER.

Why, now and then we have made free a little.
I'll tell you how we do. We cash-keepers
Hold correspondence, and supply each other
Where'er we want. I borrow for a week
Two hundred pounds of one, as much of a second,
A third lays down the rest; and, when they want,
As my master's cash comes in, I do repay it.

LUKE.

You do! that is an excellent device.
When you have this, why should you wish for others?

LEDGER.

The pitcher may too oft—you know the proverb.
There's an arrear of near five hundred pounds
Stares me i' th' face. I needs must wipe it out
By some bold stroke.

INVOICE.

And I too must replace

Some cash I borrow'd from my master's steck,
For a curs'd speculation that deceiv'd me.
He will be settling my account ere long.

LEDGER.

Besides all this, we want some present monies,
For our occasions ; if you'll join with us,
You shall have share—

FURBISH (*without*).

Why Luke ! where are you Luke !

LUKE.

I'm call'd for.

FURBISH (*without*).

Luke ! I say, my lady wants you.

LUKE.

I must begone.

LEDGER.

When shall we meet again ?

LUKE.

Immediately.—(*Aside*.)—A precious couple truly ![*Exeunt*.]

SCENE III.

*Lady Traffic's Apartment.**Luke and Furbish meet.*

FURBISH.

So ! you are come at last. Do you suppose
I've nought to do, but follow and wait on
Your leisure, sirrah !

LUKE.

Truly, I made haste!

FURBISH.

Yes, as a snail does ; but, I warrant me,
 You can run fast enough, when dinner calls you.
 You're never tardy then. Were I my lady
 I'd keep no sturdy varlet to indulge
 In sloth and idleness, when he might work,
 Were he ten times my husband's brother.

LUKE.

Nay,

I pray your patience, gentle Mrs. Furbish,
 I mean not to offend. What is't you want ?

FURBISH.

It is my lady wants you. See you stir not
 'Till she come here. [Exit Furbish.]

LUKE.

I know my duty better.
 Heav'ns ! can I bear to be thus trampled on,
 To meet with greater contumely than
 The beggar, who implores the paltry dole
 Of the way-faring traveller, or sues
 For offals to appease his rav'ning hunger ?
 So—so—so—so—I do deserve it all,
 All that their bitter'st scorn can load me with.
 Those, who through accident or weakness fall,

May merit men's compassion ; but that I,
 Who knew profuseness of expence the parent
 Of wretched poverty, that I should waste
 My substance, and reduce myself to live on
 The alms of others, steering on a rock
 I might have shunn'd !

Enter Lady Traffic.

LADY TRAFFIC.

So, sir, where is Sir John?

LUKE.

Alas ! I know not, madam.

LADY TRAFFIC.

"I would become you

T'attend him, sir, and not to linger thus
 Idling about the house, eating and drinking—

LUKE.

I would have done so, but, when he went hence,
 He did forbid me.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Who comes here ? Sir Maurice !

Enter Sir Maurice.

LUKE.

Know you, sir, where Sir John—

LADY TRAFFIC,

Stand farther off !

You're no companion for him, and his bus'ness

Aims not at you, I think.

LUKE.

I'm silenc'd, madam!

(*Aside*) Must I bear this too!

SIR MAURICE.

What I have to say

This gentleman may very fitly hear.

Stand forward, master Luke!

LADY TRAFFIC.

What mean you, sir?

Know you not who he is? Begone, I say!

SIR MAURICE.

Stay, sir—I know both who and what he is,
Which you as yet are ignorant of. Nay, madam,
Frown not, nor let your angry bosom swell
With insolent contempt. I have a tale,
Which I am griev'd it falls to me to tell,
Will make you change your tone. Would I were spar'd
The dreadful task I now must execute!
Poor Sir John; madam!

LADY TRAFFIC.

What of him?

SIR MAURICE.

Is gone!

LADY TRAFFIC.

Gone? Where?—So suddenly—Without a notice—

SIR MAURICE.

Aye, madam, gone to where we all must follow.
 'Tis indeed dreadful—but the truth must out.
 He's—

LADY TRAFFIC.

Speak, nor keep me in suspense—

SIR MAURICE.

He's dead!

LADY TRAFFIC.

Dead, say you, sir! oh!

SIR MAURICE.

Be composed, I pray,
 And give me your attention. 'Twill behove you.
 Your conduct, madam—I must speak strong truths—
 Work'd on him so, as to o'ercome his reason,
 And drove him to the doing of an act,
 Which, when once done, can never be recall'd.
 This morning—but I spare you the recital—
 This morn they bore his body to my house,
 Where, as he went upon his desp'rate errand,
 He left this instrument. It is his will.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Oh, worthy sir! Your words have pierced my hear
 My conduct caus'd this fatal act! Alas!
 To what hath it reduc'd me?

SIR MAURICE.

What indeed !

'Tis too late now to remedy your faults,
Or for him to forgive them. This small paper
Contains your doom. By it, his whole estate
In lands, and leases, debts, and present monies,
With all the moveables he stood possess'd of,
Are pass'd o'er to his brother. (*Gives the will to Luke.*)

LUKE.

How ! to me ?

SIR MAURICE.

Aye, sir, to you alone. You're now the owner
Of this fair mansion, and of all the wealth
Which lately was your brother's. Here, sir, take
The key of 's counting-house.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Have I no part ?

I and my daughters, are we quite cut off ?

Is nothing left for our provision ?

SIR MAURICE.

Nothing—

Save what this gentleman, in his free bounty,
And from his gen'rous nature, may bestow.

LUKE (*aside*).

Humph !

SIR MAURICE.

He, I know, is pitiful. Humility
From him may gain remission, and perhaps
Forgiveness of your former usage.

LUKE (*aside*).

So!

SIR MAURICE.

Enjoy your own, good sir; you'll find it ample;
But use it with due rev'rence. I once heard you
Speak most divinely in the opposition
Of a revengeful humour: shew it to her,
And those who then depended on the mercy
Of your late brother, now at your devotion;
And thus confirm the opinion I held of you,
Of which I am most confident.

LUKE.

I pray you

Give me some time. This sudden change of fortune
Might overturn a sounder judgment.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Sir,

I do confess my conduct has been such,
As scarcely I can justify, or you
Perhaps forgive. Nay, turn not from me, sir;
I do confess my errors, and thus lowly

Bend for your pardon.

LUKE.

Madam, pray you rise,
And rise with this assurance, if I'm chang'd
In any thing, 'tis only in my power.
This heap of wealth, sir, which you bring to me
I feel a weighty burthen.

LADY TRAFFIC.

You shall have
My best assistance, if you please to use it,
To help you to support it.

LUKE.

By no means :
The weight of it shall rather sink me, than you part
With one short minute from those lawful pleasures
Which you've a right to, in your care to aid me.
Whate'er the penalty, I must endure it.
But as to its exercise—

SIR MAURICE.

Yet take good heed, sir,
You suffer not your generosity
To ruin what he rais'd—

LADY TRAFFIC.

And we fall from
That height we have maintain'd.

LUKE.

You little guess
 What shall be your condition. You have held me
 'Till now an abject creature, and apportion'd
 Your treatment to my baseness : now, since fortune
 Hath rais'd me to this station, you shall find
 You judg'd not rightly of me. It shall be
 My study, nay my pride, to approve myself
 Such as I am.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Your words speak comfort to me ;
 You are the only stay, the sole support,
 I now have upon earth. Though I was rude,
 I own it, sir, with shame, and often us'd you
 Too roughly for your virtues, yet I know
 You had them ; but, if I had doubted them,
 Your present noble conduct would convince me
 With what profusion they're bestow'd on you.

LUKE.

If thus you speak before you've made assay
 Of my intent, what words will tell your feeling,
 When I shall give you proof on't ? I rejoice
 Most in my sudden riches, as they afford me
 The means of shewing how I estimate
 Your signal claims upon my gratitude.

I will invent new fashions to adorn you,
 To shew your shapes and graces to perfection.
 You have been brave, but shall be now much braver:
 You hitherto have borne the port of ladies,
 Fine courtly ladies; but you now shall shew
 A dignity more fitting your desert.
 Go to, the world shall see it, and admire.
 I'll make it the first fruits of my preferment.
 What garb is this you wear? Doth this become you?
 Cast off these rags, indulge in splendid dreams
 Of future greatness, which, when you awake,
 I'll make conspicuous. But I must be
 A doer, not a promiser. The performance
 Requiring haste, I kiss your hands, and leave you.

[Exit Lake.

SIR MAURICE.

Are we both turned to statues? Have his words
 Charm'd us to silence?

LADY TRAFFIC.

I could ne'er have thought
 He had this in him.

SIR MAURICE.

He's a noble fellow.

I knew he'd prove so.

LADY TRAFFIC.

To forget so soon

Our former treatment of him, so unworthy
Of his rare qualities ! Sir John himself
Was never half so gen'rous or so kind.

SIR MAURICE.

Aye, there, indeed ! Poor man ! what loss was his !

LADY TRAFFIC.

Why, certainly, when we reflect upon it,
He was a worthy man, and I am sure,
I feel his loss, and I've a right to do so,
And so have his poor daughters.

SIR MAURICE.

Aye, in truth—
Good worthy gentleman ! ah ! we may live
Long ere we see his like !

LADY TRAFFIC.

To leave us thus
Mere destitutes—out of his boundless wealth
Not to bequeath us wherewithal to keep us—
I'm sure it is enough to break one's heart.

SIR MAURICE.

Come, come, take courage ! things are not so bad.
You hear what Luke, your gen'rous brother, says.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Aye, he indeed is of a different sort !
I see he'll treat us in a nobler way
Than Sir John chose to do. He never shew'd

Such liberality ; his utmost bounty,
And that too hardly drawn from him by prayers,
Was parsimony, when compar'd with this.
But I must go, and hasten to his daughters.
Poor things ! I'm sure they'll want some consolation !

[Exit.

SIR MAURICE.

Well, go thy ways, thou art a rare one truly !
This will I to Sir John forthwith convey.
Our plot goes forward. He will find my judgment
In either case confirmed : his wife, the vain,
Imperious, fickle thing I thought her ever,
And his degraded brother, honest Luke,
Unchang'd by wealth, and undebauch'd by power.

[Exit.

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

The Counting House.

Enter Luke, hastily.

LUKE.

'Twas no fantastic object, but a truth,
A real truth, no dream! I did not slumber,
And could wake ever with a brooding eye
To gaze upon't! It did endure the touch;
I saw and felt it: yet what I beheld,
And handled oft, did so transcend belief,
I faintly could give credit to my senses.
What art thou—shall I call thee Chance or Fortune?—
Thou dumb magician, that without a charm
Did'st make mine entrance easy, to possess
What wise men wish, and toil their lives in vain for?
The Sybil's golden bough, the great elixir,
Imagined only by the alchymist,
Compar'd with thee are shadows, thou the substance

And guardian of felicity! No marvel
 My brother priz'd thee, thou'st an owner now,
 Who can still better estimate thy worth.
 In every corner of that sacred room
 Silver is heap'd in bags, as if unworthy
 To hold an equal rank with the bright gold
 That boasts pre-eminence: but when mine eyes
 Had made discovery of the caskets, kept
 Under a double safety, and they open'd,
 Each sparkling diamond from itself shot forth
 A pyramid of flames; sapphires and rubies,
 And ropes of orient pearl!—These seen, I could not
 But hold cheap gold itself.—Then, in a coffer,
 Lay deeds of gift, bonds, and securities,
 And, above all, what gladden'd me to see,
 A manor, fast bound in a skin of parchment,
 The wax continuing hard, the acres melting,
 Pawn'd to my brother. There is scarce a shire
 In Wales or England, where my monies are not
 Lent out at usury; the certain hook
 To draw in more.—I am sublim'd! gross earth
 Supports me not!—I walk on air!—Who's that?

Enter Holdfast.

Keep off!—you shall not touch it!—Oh, 'tis you!
 I knew you not at first.—Well, honest Holdfast!
 What is't you want with me?

HOLDFAST.

There are some here
Who do enquire for you : your needy debtors,
Risk, Venture, Penury.

LUKE.

What brings them here?

HOLDFAST.

I do suppose they've heard of what has happen'd,
And come to practice on your lib'ral temper.

LUKE.

How well they guess me ! Shew them straightway in.

HOLDFAST (*aside*).

Plague on such gen'rous doings ! I see beggary
Already knocking at the door.—You may enter—
But use a conscience ; do not work upon
A tender-hearted gentleman too much :
'Twill shew like charity in you. [*Exit Holdfast.*

Enter Venture, Risk, and Penury.

LUKE.

Welcome, friends :

I know your hearts and wishes ; you are glad
You've changed your creditor.

VENTURE.

Heav'n bless you, sir.

LUKE.

What is your business ?

VENTURE.

Were your brother living?
 I ne'er had hazarded to speak it, sir;
 But now the pow'r is in your worship's hand,
 I am assur'd as soon as ask'd 'tis granted.

LUKE.

I see you know me.—Well?

VENTURE.

The kind forbearance
 Of my great debt, by your means, worthy sir,
 Hath rais'd my sunk estate. I have two ships,
 Which I long since thought lost, above my hopes
 Return'd from Portugal, and richly laden.

LUKE.

Where are they?

VENTURE.

At Gravesend.

LUKE.

And what their names?

VENTURE.

Happy Return and Plenty.

LUKE.

Good names both.—

At Gravesend, say you?

VENTURE.

Aye, at Gravesend, sir.

LUKE.

I'm glad to hear on't.

VENTURE.

Heav'n reward your worship.

Now might I have your licence, as I know
With willingness I shall, to make the best
Of the commodities, though you have execution
'Gainst me and all I have, I shall be able
To pay off what I owe to all the world,
And leave myself a competence.

LUKE.

Enough—

I'll take good care of you. I am right glad
Your ships are safe arriv'd—Well, master Risk?

RISK.

You know my mortgage is foreclos'd; you may
By law seize on my lands and ruin me.
Sir John had done it, sir, had you not sway'd him.
Now, sir, I crave of you but three weeks patience:
By an uncle's death I have means left to pay all.

LUKE.

That's fortunate; for, if I recollect,
Your land's not mortgag'd for a third of it's value.

RISK.

No more, good sir.

LUKE.

Leave it to me : I'm not,
As well you know, a creditor like my brother.
Well, master Penury, what is your state ?

PENURY.

Just as it was, good sir ; the worse my luck !
What I ow'd I owe, but can pay nothing to you.
Yet the great kindness you've already shewn me,
And your sweet nature, sir, embolden me
To crave a favour from you.

LUKE.

What is it ?

PENURY.

That you'd be pleas'd in charity to intrust me
With another hundred pounds.

LUKE.

How would you use it ?

PENURY.

There is a sailor, sir, arriv'd from India,
Who brings a certain rare commodity,
Of which, for ready money, I could make
Such gain, as would rebuild my shatter'd fortune.
This way, sir, if you please—There is his name,
And the particulars I wish to deal for.

[Gives Luke a paper, which he reads, and puts in his
pocket.]

LUKE.

I'm glad you spoke of it. The thing is done.
 Make no more words on't.—Well, my worthy friends,
 I take it kind of you you came to me.
 Pray ye have some refreshment now you're here.
 I am call'd out for some half-hour or so;
 When I return, we'll settle every thing.

[Exit Luke.]

RISK.

Blessings go with you!

PENURY.

Heaven preserve you, sir!

VENTURE.

Happy were London, if there were but three such!

[Exit.]

SCENE II.

An Apartment in Sir Maurice's House.

Enter Sir John, and Sir Maurice, meeting.

SIR JOHN.

Welcome, Sir Maurice! Well, what news do you bring?
 Say, doth my brother still maintain th' opinion
 You form'd of him?

SIR MAURICE.

In truth I never saw
 A nobler gentleman, or one whose spirit

Seems better moulded to prosperity.
 No change appears in him, unless it be,
 He now is humbler than he was, more kindly,
 And more attentive to promote the good
 Of all around him. 'Tis methinks a pity
 His splendid fortune is so visionary.
 Were he in fact possessor of such means,
 Through a wide sphere his bounty would extend,
 And this our iron age, sublimed by him,
 Would beat the poet's boasted age of gold.

SIR JOHN.

Is he such truly?

SIR MAURICE.

Can I doubt my senses?

It was but now, as hither I repair'd,
 I call'd in at his house. He had gone forth,
 But I beheld a scene, which might have touch'd
 The most obdurate heart. Those ruin'd men,
 Whom, at your worthy brother's intercession,
 You had shewn favour to, were there assembled,
 Partaking of his hospitality
 And praying for a blessing on the hand,
 The charitable hand, that had redeem'd them
 From poverty and ruin. Oh, 'twas sweet
 To hear how gratefully they spoke his praise!

SIR JOHN.

My doubts are vanish'd. When your dream of wealth
Is over, my good brother, you shall wake
To better fortune than of late you've known.

SIR MAURICE.

All will commend you for't.

SIR JOHN.

There's but one thing

Which takes from my full pleasure—my proud wife.
Had she, instead of new indulgences,
Been taught a lesson of adversity,
She might have been reform'd: as 'tis, I fear,
Her wayward nature will but gain fresh strength,
And she herself grow irreclaimable.

SIR MAURICE.

Why there, indeed, I fear your project fails:
If nothing but severity can cure her,
Your hopes are small from him. Such tenderness,
Such earnestness to meet her utmost wishes
I never witness'd.—But, we do forget—
Our suitors, Ned and Heartwell, are below
Waiting your presence.

SIR JOHN.

Let us hasten to them;

And ascertain, should our device succeed,

How their affections yet stand tow'ards my daughters.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

The Counting House.

Enter Luke.

LUKE.

'Tis strange how soon a change of circumstance
 Alters men's minds and manners. Yesterday
 I was poor Luke, a mere despis'd dependent
 Upon another's charity; but now
 I'm grown right worshipful, become a patron,
 And, wheresoe'er I deign to turn my glance,
 Your purse-proud citizens, with cap in hand,
 And bended knee, strive who shall pay me homage.
 One, who 'till now, ne'er deign'd to look upon me,
 Congratulated me upon the wealth
 Thus fallen on me. I could scarce refrain
 From laughter, when, with apt humility,
 I answer'd him—"Good sir, a trifle merely;
 "The substance you conceive so great no way
 "Answers its rumour'd magnitude; alas!
 "With a great charge I'm left but a poor man."
 "Poor!" quoth my citizen, with feign'd surprize.
 Now came my answer, "Poor, compar'd with what
 "Tis thought I do possess: some little land,

" Fair household furniture, a few good debts,
 " But empty bags, I find; yet I will be
 " A faithful steward."—Thus I talk'd to them,
 While they, the more I strove to underrate
 My affluence, conceited me more rich.

Enter Holdfast.

Well, Sirrah Holdfast! have you ta'en good care
 Of those I trusted to your charge?

HOLDFAST.

Aye, marry,

If giving them enough be taking care.
 There they're all sitting with your hopeful clerks,
 Eating and drinking, gaily quaffing bumpers
 To their kind patron's health. You begin well—
 Keep open house—let who will live upon you—
 'Tis your true way—I never knew it fail.

LUKE.

Why, Holdfast! what is't moves your choler thus?

HOLDFAST.

Nay, I'm a fool; 'tis no concern of mine;
 Your riches are your own; do as you please;
 However deep a well, it has a bottom,
 And may be drain'd.

LUKE.

You speak like oracles;
 But we'll discourse of this when we've more leisure.

Meantime, bring here my brother's wife and daughters.

[*Exit Holdfast.*]

If riches are a burthen, they're a light one.

Methinks I'm like a captive, from whose limbs

The shackles that confin'd him are remov'd.

My heart is light, my spirits brisk and high—

Enter Lady Traffic, Maria, Eliza, and Holdfast.

So you here—Why, how now? What means this?

Is't thus I am obeyed? Where are the habits

I order'd for these women?

HOLDFAST.

Not come home.

LUKE.

And wherefore not?

HOLDFAST.

It is the tailor's fault.

He says he has some other work in hand,

Which must be finish'd ere he set about them.

LUKE.

Plague on his tardiness! Go to him, sirrah!

And bid him hasten.

[*Exit Holdfast.*]

LADY TRAFFIC.

Nay, my kindest brother,

I pray you don't distress yourself about us.

The garments we already have will suit us.

LUKE.

No, they will not. You shall have others soon,
More corresponding with your state and merits.
You shall lay by this flimsy garniture,
These vain appendages of senseless folly,
And have your outsides as disrobed of pomp,
As are your fallen fortunes.—Russet—dowls—
The lowliest raiment of the humblest she,
Who seeks her scanty maintenance by labour,
Will suit you better than these tinsel trappings.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Why, what is this, sir? You are not in earnest—
You cannot mean—I do protest at first
You frightened me—Had I not known you better,
I should have thought you meditated things
Most foreign to your kind and gen'rous heart.

LUKE.

You'll find I mean what I have said.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Alas!

Do you thus preserve your protestation to me?

MARIA.

Is this fit treatment for us, sir?

ELIZA.

Are those

Becoming habits for your brother's daughters?

LUKE.

'Twould suit you more to thank my weak indulgence,
Which gives you licence to appear in them,
Than to be thus exceptionous. I'm the judge
Of what befits your station. Would you ape
The fashions of court ladies, whose high titles,
And pedigrees of long descent, give warrant
For their superfluous brav'ry?

LADY TRAFFIC.

Will you break

Your promise to us, then?

LUKE.

No! I'll make good

My promise, and will shew you like yourselves,
In your own natural shapes, and stand resolv'd
You shall continue so.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Most worthy sir—

LUKE.

Sir? Sirrah! that's your term. Use your old phrase;
You know I'm us'd to bear it.

LADY TRAFFIC.

I implore you

Hold not remembrance of it. I acknowledge
I have deserv'd ill of you, yet despair not

Though we are at your disposal, you'll maintain us
As suits our just pretensions—

LUKE.

'Tis my purpose—

LADY TRAFFIC.

Nor make us thus ridiculous.

LUKE.

It was

Your insolence that made you so, your pride,
Your strange forgetfulness of what ye were,
And your contempt of those whose purses could not
Hold equal rate with your extravagance.
What right had you to arrogate a rank
To which you'd no pretensions? Who were you,
To claim precedence, and to hold a state,
To scorn your equals, and treat your brother
As he were meaner than the dust you trod on?
Who rais'd you to the power you thus abus'd?
Your husband—brother of that humble Luke,
Your quondam servant, now your master, lady,

LADY TRAFFIC.

Alas! alas!—(*weeping.*)

LUKE.

Aye, bring your spirit down

To a level with your fortune. I'll cut off
Whatever is exorbitant in you,

Or in those madams, and reduce you to my condition
 Your natural form and habits. You shall now
 Learn to employ your time to better purpose
 Than you were wont; those taper fingers now
 Shall grow industrious; I'll have spinning-wheels
 And distaffs for you; you shall learn to dress
 And serve each other; for I'll have no drones,
 No waiting women to attend upon you.
 You know my pleasure!

LADY TRAFFIC.

Oh my pride and scorn!
 How justly am I punish'd!

MARIA.

Now we pay
 A heavy price for past indulgences.
 Had you but treated Heartwell with more favour—

ELIZA.

Had you not shewn young Lacey such disdain,
 We had not thus been subjected to him.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Heap not fresh causes of regret upon me;
 I feel enough already.

LUKE.

Do you so?

I'm right glad on't. 'Tis as it should be.

Away! set to your tasks!

[Exeunt Lady Traffic, Maria, and Elisa.]

So! that's well done.

This act of justice o'er, now for my clients.

Their business will be shortly settled. Holdfast!

Enter Holdfast.

Send in the gay companions you have yonder.

HOLDFAST.

Here! please you to come up!—They'll talk you now
Into whate'er they please. They know your temper,
And how to take advantage of your softness.—
Aye, aye, I hear you! Marry, 'tis no wonder
You're in high spirits—

Enter Venture, Risk, Penury, Ledger, and Invoice.

LUKE.

Holdfast, leave us.

[Exit Holdfast.]

Well,

You see I've not delay'd you. All is ready
For finishing your business.

VENTURE.

Worthy sir,

We are your servants.

RISK.

Our best thanks are weak.

PENURY.

We're bound to pray for you.

LUKE.

Not bound as yet.

(Stamps with his foot.)

Enter Bailiffs.

FIRST BAILIFF.

You Invoice, and you Ledger, I arrest you
Each for a thousand pounds.

SECOND BAILIFF.

Risk, Venture, Penury,

I do arrest you.

VENTURE.

Me, sir? At whose suit?

SECOND BAILIFF.

There's our employer—you had better ask him.

VENTURE.

At your's, good sir?

PENURY.

It is impossible.

LEDGER.

Nay, sir, this passes jest.

LUKE *(to the Bailiffs)*.

Are you not more

Acquainted with the dangers of a rescue,

Than to stand parleying with them thus? The Compter

Is their fit place.

INVOICE.

And can you be in earnest?

LUKE.

Aye, marry, sir, and you shall find it so.

LEDGER.

What have we done, that you should treat us thus?

LUKE.

Poor innocent! You know the tricks of trade,
Hold correspondence with your fellow cashiers—
There's a small trifle of five hundred pounds,
For all of which you'll please to account. You might
Defraud my brother—if you can, evade me.

PENURY.

Your worship will not be so hard with us?

LUKE.

Pay to the uttermost farthing what you owe,
Or lie in prison.

VENTURE.

Can a gentleman
Of your soft feeling temper speak such language?

PENURY.

So honest, so religious—

RISK.

One that preach'd
So much of charity for us to your brother?

LUKE.

Yes, when I was in poverty it shew'd well;
But I inherit with his state his mind,
And his more stubborn nature. I then might,
For weighty purposes, discourse of pity,
The poor man's orisons, and such like nothings;
But what I thought you now shall feel, and home too,
Kind master Luke hath said it—off with them!

VENTURE.

Hear me but one word! let me make the best
Of my two ships!

PENURY.

Lend me the sum you promised!

RISK.

A few weeks patience to redeem my mortgage!
You shall be satisfied.

VENTURE.

To the last farthing!
We do most humbly beg for your compassion!

LUKE.

I'll shew some mercy, which is, that I will not
Torture with idle hopes, but make you know
What you shall trust to. Your ships to my own use
Are seiz'd on. I have got into my hands
Your bargain from the sailor: 'twas a good one
For such a petty sum. I likewise take

Th' extremity of your mortgage.

RISK.

Mercy!

VENTURE.

Have pity! pity!

PENURY.

Spare us, worthy sir!

LUKE.

Move mountains with your breath! It shakes not me!
Here! do your duty! Carry them away!

[Exeunt severally.]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

The Counting House.

Enter Luke.

LUKE.

I'll give no further audiences to-day—
Tell those who wait, they may return to-morrow,
When I shall have more leisure.—What is wealth,
If it can't purchase pleasure for its master,
And minister delight? For one short day
I've wrought enough; what rests shall be mine own.
I will indulge in varied luxury,
In due gradation gratifying each sense,
'Till, satiated they sink into repose,
And cushions of soft yielding down invite me
To court th' embraces of restoring sleep.
Who waits?

Enter Holdfast.

Come here. Thou hast been used to cater?

HOLDFAST.

Aye, marry, in Sir John's time I've been used.

He kept the noblest table in the city.

LUKE.

'Twas but a board for beadsmen, when compar'd
With what I mean to keep. This day I'll put
Thy talents to the test. See thou prepare
A feast for me, more sumptuous than e'er grac'd
Our civic meetings—

HOLDFAST.

What guests have you?

LUKE.

None!

I'll sit alone, and surfeit in my store,
Whilst others wanting pine with envy at me;
My happier genius pamper'd with the thought
Of what I am, and what they long to be.

HOLDFAST.

Less surely might suffice.

LUKE.

Say that again.

And I will double it. Prescribe to me
Have I not means enough? Am I not rich?

HOLDFAST.

I'm silenced. (*Aside.*) Nobody to sup with him!

LUKE.

Go! Let bright tapers emulate the day,
While subtlest perfumes spread their mingling sweets,

And music floats i' th' air. Begons, and do it!

[*Exit Holdfast.*]

This is to live! I'll rack my brain to invent
Diversity of pleasure—

Enter Holdfast.

HOLDFAST.

Here are two,
Who say they needs must speak with you forthwith.

LUKE.

Did I not tell thee I would be alone?

HOLDFAST.

Aye, but these come upon a pressing errand.
The fathers of your two apprentices,
To supplicate your mercy.

LUKE.

Let them enter.

Enter Old Invoice and Old Ledger.

OLD INVOICE.

Good sir, we do presume to wait upon you.
As humble intercessors for our sons.

LUKE.

Your sons? Yourself, I rather take it.

OLD INVOICE.

Sir!

LUKE.

Why know you not I have your bonds within,

For their upright demeanour in my service ?
The penalties are weighty, let me tell you.

OLD LEDGER.

We know it, worthy sir, and we are come
To learn what is your pleasure.

OLD INVOICE.

So you please

To use a conscience—

OLD LEDGER.

Which we hope you will do,
For your own worship's sake.

LUKE.

A conscience, say you?

You know the penalties your bonds contain ?
I'll shew you I've a conscience. I require
No more than their extent.

OLD INVOICE.

What say you, sir ?

That is two thousand pounds a-piece.

LUKE.

'Tis so.

Your memory is correct.

OLD LEDGER.

Two thousand pounds!

Where think you we can raise it ?

LUKE.

Where you please.

That's your concern, not mine.

OLD INVOICE.

No moderation?

LUKE.

I have your bonds. Look to it.

OLD INVOICE.

We are undone!

OLD LEDGER.

Our families are ruin'd! Do, good sir,
Pray take compassion on us!

LUKE.

If ye fail me,

Your lodging is the Compter. Holdfast!

Enter Holdfast.

Here!

Turn out those whining dotards, and then take
Lights to the banquet chamber. Do it quickly!

[Exeunt severally.]

SCENE II.

Lady Traffic's Apartment.

*Lady Traffic, Maria and Eliza discovered, in poor habits,
each at a spinning wheel.*

LADY TRAFFIC (*rising*).

I cannot compass it—my hands, unus'd
To labour, are unable to perform
The servile task impos'd on me. Good heav'n!
Am I reduc'd to this! I, who so lately
Scarce spoke my will before it was obey'd,
To be so suddenly reduced, brought lower
Than a poor menial!—I shall go distracted!—
And can ye patiently endure such suff'rance?

MARIA.

How can we otherwise? Those days are past,
When, by th' indulgence of a tender father,
We had no other care than how to spend
Our time in pleasure, and no other thought
Than to invent new means of happiness.

ELIZA.

Alas! we knew not then how blest we were;
We ne'er conceiv'd, when fortune smil'd on us,
How soon we should experience a reverse.
Oh, my dear father! what a loss was thine.

LADY TRAFFIC.

I charge you touch not on that string ; it jars,
 And to my very heart conveys a pang,
 Sharp as a viper's tooth. Oh ! it was I,
 Senseless, inhuman woman ! I, who drove him
 To act this desperation on himself,
 Compell'd that hand, that never was extended
 Tow'rds me but in affection, thus to arm
 Against his precious life ! Oh, mercy, mercy !
 (Kneels.
 Forgive, me, righteous heav'n !

MARIA.

Dear madam, rise ;
 Give o'er this unavailing sorrow.

LADY TRAFFIC.

No !

Conscience will speak. 'Twas I, my children, did it,
 I struck the blow, I robb'd you of your father !

ELIZA.

You judge indeed too hardly of yourself.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Ah ! could I now implore his blest forgiveness,
 Fall prostrate at his feet, confess my fault,
 And call him to be witness of the change
 Wrought on my stubborn heart ! That is denied me ;
 But what remains within my pow'r I'll do.

I'll cast far from me that offensive pride,
 Those rebel inclinations that undid us;
 To the low level of our humble fortunes
 I will reduce myself, and by contrition
 Atone for what is past.—And can you pardon
 My treatment of the youths who sought your hands?

MARIA.

Alas! why will you still invent new cause
 For vain regret? Let us not talk of them.—
 Sister, how goes your task? What, sigh? Take courage;
 Mine, as you see, advances. We must now
 Learn how to be industrious. We have need on't.

Enter Holdfast.

HOLDFAST.

I have it in command from master Luke,
 To tell you that your dinner is prepar'd.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Tell him we feel his kind attention tow'rd's us,
 But wish not to attend his festive board,
 While yet our sorrow's fresh. We should prefer
 Some small collation in our private chamber.

HOLDFAST.

That's fortunate; for such is his intent.
 In the next room there is your table spread,
 And your collation waits you.

LADY TRAFFIC. *Enter Lady Traffic.*

Little now

Will serve us.

HOLDFAST. *Enter Holdfast.*

That is fortunate again.

What he allows you will not breed a surfeit.

Three slices from a wholesome household loaf,

With water wherewithal to wash it down,

Is what his bounty sends you. *[Exit.]*

LADY TRAFFIC. *Enter Lady Traffic.*

Come my poor girls! I could not hope for better,
For I have not deserv'd it. But for you—

MARIA.

Let not a thought for us increase your anguish.
Whate'er your fortunes are, we'll share in them.

LADY TRAFFIC. *Enter Lady Traffic.*

Sweet girl! I've not deserv'd this kindness from you:
You know not how it soothes my anguish'd heart,
And strengthens it to bear this weight of woe.
If you can thus forget my treatment of you,
We will sustain adversity together,
And patiently submit, till pitying Heav'n
Compassionate our sufferings! *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE III.

A splendid Apartment, lighted up. At the farther end a table, covered with a banquet, at which Luke is discovered sitting.—(Soft Music.)

LUKE (*rising*.)

Give o'er! I've had enough!—This is true wisdom,
 When a rich man like me lives to himself
 In his full height of glory. I can brook
 No rival in this happiness: it comes
 With double relish, when I do reflect,
 That, while I taste this plenitude of bliss,
 So many want it. Brightness to the star
 That governed at my birth! Shoot down thine influence,
 And with a perpetuity of being,
 Continue this felicity, not gain'd
 By vows to saints above, and much less purchased
 By anxious industry! I owe it all
 To my best friend, dissimulation
 And to the specious shape I wore of goodness.—
 I'll drink another cup.—(*Drinks*.) This gen'rous liquor
 Invigorates my heart, makes my warm fancy
 Grow wanton. Would I had one to behold me
 In my resplendent height of rich enjoyment,
 One, from whose baseness my transcendent splendor
 Might doubly be reflected!

Enter Holdfast.

What brings thee?

HOLDFAST.

Sir Maurice Lacey would have access to you.

LUKE.

By heav'n he comes beyond my hope.—Admit him.

[Exit Holdfast.]

What brings him here o' th' sudden? 'Tis no matter—

He's a prime citizen, a man of worship,

My whilom advocate, good easy man!

The voucher of mine honesty and honour.

He shall have proof on't.

Enter Sir Maurice.

Good Sir Maurice Lacey!

This is most kind of you. You take me here

A little unexpected: had I known

Of this high honour, I had been prepared.

SIR MAURICE.

Your privacy, methinks, appears to equal

The state of others: but I come not here

To share your luxury.

LUKE.

To what other cause

Am I indebted for this favour then?

SIR MAURICE.

I held you for a man of worth, believed you

Honest, religious, kind, compassionate,
 Perfect in all the theory of virtue.
 How comes it then, that tow'rd's the very persons,
 Whose cause you advocated with your brother,
 You've acted with such cool barbarity?
 How could you bear to hear those aged men,
 Bow'd with affliction for their sons' misconduct,
 Implore your pity, yet deny their suit?
 Have you so soon forgot, with your dependance,
 Your principles and feelings?

LUKE.

Have you said?

SIR MAURICE.

I have, and wait your answer.

LUKE.

Thus it is:

My fortune is mine own; I may dispose it
 As best may suit my pleasure, or convenience.
 I am no boy, to bow me to correction,
 Nor have you, as I think, a right to apply it.
 You have my answer, sir.

SIR MAURICE.

Is't come to this?

Was then your seeming sanctity assum'd
 But as a cloak to cover your depravity?

LUKE.

It answer'd well it's purpose, for it gave me
The good things I possess.

SIR MAURICE.

Bold hypocrite!

You think you stand securely : but beware!—

LUKE.

I thank you for your caution. Good Sir John
Will not rise from his grave to throw me down,
And as for what thou say'st, it moves me not.

SIR MAURICE.

These monies, strangely fallen thus upon you,
Have giv'n you much assurance.

LUKE.

They have so:

And good Sir Maurice, now you talk of monies,
Be pleas'd to pay in what you owe to me.
You'll give me leave to wonder, that your wisdom
Should thus afford you leisure to discuss
These petty bus'nesses, you being yourself
So in my danger.

SIR MAURICE.

In thy danger?

LUKE.

Mine.

I find among my deeds a manor pawn'd,

Pawn'd, good sir—Lacey Manor—to my brother
 Pawn'd for ten thousand pounds in hand laid down.
 You are a man of worship; so, Sir Maurice,
 Pray pay you in my monies. Be not surpriz'd;
 Though you do bear me hard, I'll shew I love you.
 There is a thing they call a writ, and one
 Who has authority to serve it on you.
 I should be loth to see your name disgraced,
 And that same Compter is an awkward lodging
 For one so dignified as you.—You're angry
 For my good counsel! Well, Sir, had I known
 Your coming, I had had my serjeants ready
 For your reception.

SIR MAURICE.

I am dumb with wonder!

LUKE.

Now rail at me again.—(*Drinks.*)

Here's to your health

And good digestion!

SIR MAURICE.

Thou'rt so lost in baseness,

I'll not reply to thee: When next we meet—

LUKE.

As that, if right I guess, may not be soon,
 Stay but a moment, and I'll give you more
 For pleasant contemplation. Holdfast!

Enter Holdfast.

HOLDFAST.

Sir!

LUKE.

Bring here those women! *[Exit Holdfast.*

Nay, Sir, you shall see

I don't do things by halves. When I begin,
I know how to go through.*Enter Lady Traffic, Maria, and Eliza.*

As you are their friend,

It cannot but be pleasant to behold them

Deck'd with the robes that suit their wretchedness.

Dowlas, though coarse, is warm—

SIR MAURICE.

Cool, specious villain!

Was it for this thy too indulgent brother

Gave thee his wealth?

LUKE.

My answer's plain.—It was.

He was a provident and wise testator,

Who knew us both, and made a just distinction.

To them, whose arrogance provok'd his fate,

He left their due, contempt and poverty,

While to my merits he shew'd due respect,

And made me independant and their master.

[*To Lady Traffic*] I've done with you; hence, to your chambers go!

And set about your tasks.

SIR MAURICE.

Stay yet, I pray you:

I've somewhat more to say to this bad man.

Tell me, if yet thou hast or sense or feeling,

Is't thus you keep your specious promises

You made this wretched lady, when hard fate

Cast her and thine own nieces on thy bounty?

Hast thou no pity on their suff'rings?

LUKE.

No!

They'd none for mine. Their reign is at an end;

'Tis now my turn to rule. I've felt their sway,

And now I'll shew them what my mercy is.

SIR MAURICE.

Good lady, be of cheer. He may relent.

LUKE.

Aye, when revenge is satisfied; no sooner.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Forbear, good sir, nor try to move him further.

The mis'ries I sustain are small, compar'd

With my past errors: if my suff'rings can

Atone for them, I gladly will endure them.

Small are the ills wherewith he threatens me.
 What matters it what raiment I put on?
 What is the labour, what the scanty food
 To which his sentence dooms me, but the penalty
 Impos'd upon a disobedient wife,
 Who never knew the treasure she possess'd,
 'Till she for ever lost it!

SIR MAURICE.

If you feel,
 If you do truly sorrow for your faults——

LADY TRAFFIC.

To feel! to sorrow! they are terms too gentle,
 Repentance, never ending but with life,
 And pray'rs and tears pour'd forth to angry heav'n,
 Are now my consolation and sole hope.

SIR MAURICE.

Take courage, lady; comfort may appear.
 And thou, obdurate man! whose savage heart
 Nor gratitude, nor pity can assuage,
 Though now from thy proud pinnacle of greatness
 On all within thy sphere thou rain'st down plagues,
 Beware, look to thyself; the angry bolt
 Of vengeance now is bursting o'er thy head!

[*Exit Sir Maurice.*]

LUKE.

Rail on, vain dotard! thou art in my pow'r,
 And soon shalt feel it. As for you, proud madam!

I'll make you feel it too ; you shall perceive
I am the master of your fate ; each hour
Shall teach you what dependence upon me is.

LADY TRAFFIC.

I am prepar'd for all ; it will but make me
Contrast more strongly my lamented husband
With his degenerate heritor.

LUKE.

Your husband !

Could he but know the treatment I will give thee,
My vengeance would be full. Oh ! that the grave
Would yield him up again, such as he was,
Complete in all his senses and affections.
Here would I stand, and as his eyes met mine—
Have mercy ! save me ! (*staggers to a chair.*)

[*Lady Traffic falls on her knees.*]

*Enter Sir John, Sir Maurice, Heartwell, and Edward
Lacey.*

SIR JOHN (*to Lady Traffic*).

Rise, I am thy husband,
Thy living husband. Once more in mine arms
I hold thee, and receive thee as my treasure !

MARIA and ELIZA.

My father !

SIR JOHN.

Let me hold you to my heart.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Am I awake? Art thou, art thou indeed
 Restor'd? Alas! and can you condescend
 To notice ~~one~~ who has so ill deserv'd
 Your tenderness?

SIR JOHN.

Be all forgotten, love!
 That can allay our present happiness.
 (*To Heartwell and Edward Lacey*) Why stand you gazing
 here? Are you afraid
 To seize the yielding hands which thus I give you?

EDWARD:

I take it as the pledge of future blessings?

HEARTWELL.

Lady, I hold my life but as your servant—
 By this fair hand I swear I dearly love you.

SIR MAUNICE

That's well.—Now turn thee from this scene of joy,
 And look on that fall'n wretch.—Arouse thee, man!
 Behold th' avenger of thy crimes before thee.

SIR JOHN.

Rise, brother!

LUKE.

No—I cannot look upon thee—
 I'll fall yet lower—Thus upon the ground,

My fittest place, I will lie humbly prostrate,
And supplicate for pardon and for favour.

SIR JOHN.

Pardon thou hast; but look not for my favour.
Thou hast offended, Luke, beyond remission.
I've known thy practices, thy tyranny,
Thy dark dissimulation. Those who suffer'd
By thine oppression, are again set free:
But, though thy wish was foil'd, thy base intent
Bears everlasting testimony 'gainst thee.

LUKE.

Let me implore you to look kindly on me!
I am a poor weak man, who will obey you,
Live but in your good favour—

SIR JOHN.

I have said.

LUKE.

Do you bereave me then of ev'ry hope?
Am I cast off for ever and abandon'd?

SIR JOHN.

Give o'er for shame. I've answer'd thee already.

LUKE (*rising*).

Hope then is gone, and I'm once more myself!
There! triumph o'er the wreck you see before you!
Heap insult upon insult!—I defy you!—

Bar not my way!—the world is wide enough
For all to range in. I will find my part,
And work my way in't.—Curses light upon you!

[*Exit Luke.*

SIR JOHN.

What strange obduracy!—But come, my love!
Let us retire, and from the painful past,
Draw blessings unalloy'd.

LADY TRAFFIC.

Sure I have liv'd in one eventful day;
More than an age, and bought such rich experience
As must preserve me humble. I have seen
In that bad man the image of myself;
I'll lay it to my heart. Henceforth to thee,
Thou best of men! I dedicate my life,
My proudest title—thy obedient wife.

[*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

Written by S. J. Arnold, Esq. and spoken by Lady Traffic.

CUR'D of my folly as a scolding wife,
Sir John at last shall lead a quiet life!
Ye henpeck'd husbands! Ah! I greatly fear,
That many of that gentle class are here
Attend awhile—a wife reform'd shall school ye,
And shew why wives rebel—how women rule ye!

When first, in artful blandishment array'd,
You court with smiles and pray'rs th' unguarded maid;
How full of wit each word—of charms each feature—
She's angel—goddess then!—celestial creature!
While she—poor silly maid, takes all forsooth!
What female heart can doubt such charming truth?
The wedding o'er, how soon these high notes fall!
This angel proves mere woman after all!
The great discovery made, how chang'd the tone!
The husband cold—the wife indifferent grown.
'Stead of "My dear—my love—my treasur'd prize,"
"Damme my dear!" and "zounds my love," he cries!
While she soon grown by disappointment cold,
Replies,—resents, and ends a downright scold!

Now comes *her* triumph ! for you'll all allow,
 When women choose to rule—we all know *how* !
 For where's the man who dares, or old or young,
 To take the field against a woman's tongue ?
 Yonder I see a lady by the bye,
 She with sharp nose and little scolding eye ;
 —And—*or* his looks have very much behind her,
 Her caro sposo there, sits close beside her !
 —That round—fat gentleman, who looks so blue—
 You need'nt hide your face—I don't mean you !
 Now, as I take it, this harmonious pair,
 Can prove what man and wife in general are.
 Married *for love* in youth's impetuous hour,
 They dream'd of endless joy in Hymen's bow'r ;
 But long before the honeymoon was o'er,
 A quarrel rose, which lasted—~~evermore~~ !
 “ My love,” said he one evening, “ I don't choose
 “ That you should wear—my dearest—so much rouge ! ”
 “ Not rouge ! ” cried she in agony, “ I vow
 “ My love—that's quite provoking now ! ”
 Tears 'gan to fall, and with the rouge to mingle—
 “ You ne'er found fault with rouge when I was single ! ”
 “ Zounds, ma'am ! ”—“ You brute, wou'd I had longer
 “ tarried ! ”
 —“ 'Sdeath, ma'am ! you never rouged before we mar-
 “ ried ! ”

In short, ye men ! before ye wed, forbear
Of everlasting truth and love to swear ;
But married—fan with care the nuptial flame,
Nor think that *bear* and *husband*, mean the same !
Win us by love—if that won't do alone,
Die ! like Sir John—and then the day's your own !

Ladies ! a word to you, and then I've done ;
A word, to tell you what you ought to shun.
Shun contradiction—worst of all disasters—
You *should* be mistresses—but *not* be masters !
Win by affection—by persuasion rule :
Thus gain your end !—and so I shut up school.

THE END.

